

Original Story
FUMIAKI MARUTO

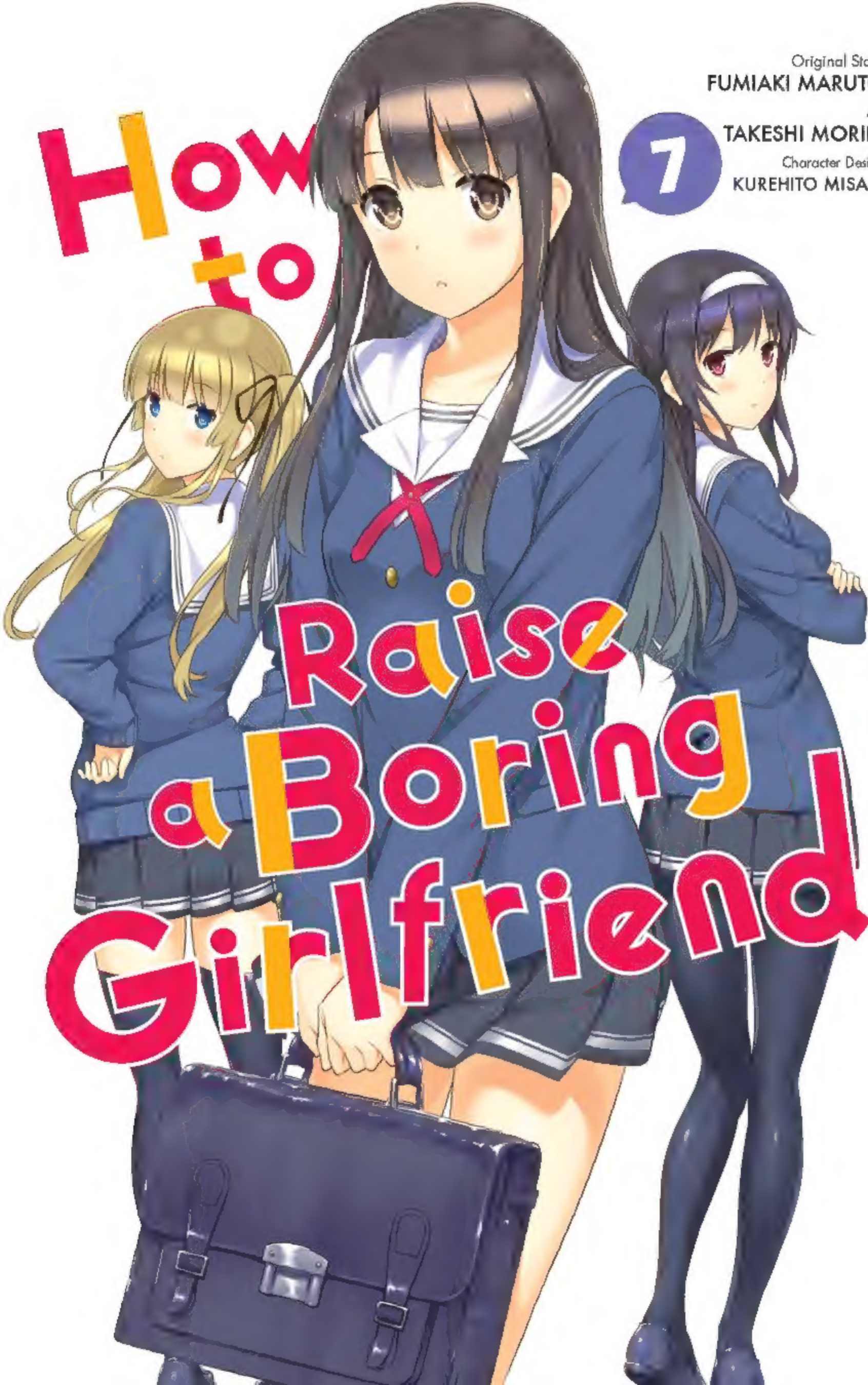
Art
TAKESHI MORIKI

Character Design
KUREHITO MISAKI

7

How
to

Raise
a Boring
Girlfriend



How to Raise a Boring Girlfriend



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How to Raise a Boring Girlfriend



Original Story by
FUMIAKI MARUTO

Art
TAKESHI MORIKI

Character Design
KUREHITO MISAKI

**How to Raise a
Boring Girlfriend**

Volume Seven

*Presented by
Fumiaki Maruto &
Takeshi Moriki*

*Character Design by
Kurehito Misaki*



I'M
SORRY,
TOMO-
KUN...

KOFF!
KOFF!

I'M
SORRY.



I'M
SO...
...
SORRY.

I
COULDN'T
...
...KEEP MY
PROMISE.

'COS
ERIRI
IS...



IT'S
FINE! SO
DON'T
CRY.

I'LL
BE RIGHT
HERE WITH
YOU ALL
DAY.



M
M
F...



ERIRI
...!

HAVING
THE
SAME
DREAM
...
...OVER
AND
OVER
AGAIN.

WAKING
UP OVER
AND
OVER...



H-
HELLO
!?

HUH
!?

It's all
done!
It's done!
The grand
route!

Incoming
Call

Eriri
Sawamura

!



WAIT!
HOLD
ON A
SEC!

WHY IS
YOUR
VOICE
ALL
HOARSE
!?

The
roughs,
the line
art, the
coloring—
I got it all
done in a
day and a
half! Seven
whole
pieces!

I did it! A
spectacular
new record!

HANG
ON...YOU
MEAN—

...!

ERIRI?



YOU
DON'T
HAVE TO
SHOUT.
I CAN
STILL...

...HEAR
YOU...



WHY
ARE YOU
YELLING
AT ME?

WHAT
THE HELL,
TOMOYA?

DOSA
(CWLUMP)



'COS
ERIRI
IS...

HEY...
ERIRI
...?

...?

GATAN
(CLATTER)

...THE
TYPE WHO'D
SOON WIND
UP DEAD IF
LEFT ON
HER OWN.



CHAPTER
33





SO
SHE'S
AT HER
VACATION
HOME IN
THE NASH
HIGHLAND
ALONE .

AND NOW
SHE'S SICK
TO BOOT.

I SEE.



URK
....!

IT'S
SO RARE TO
GET A PHONE
CALL FROM
YOU, TOMOYA-
KUN. I WAS
SURPRISED
...



THIS
IS ENAKA-
SAN.



BUT
IT'S GOOD
YOU DID.
I HAPPENED
TO BE IN THE
MIDDLE OF
A MEETING
ABOUT
SELLING
THROUGH
SHOPS.

ENAKA-
SAN WAS
THERE AND
OFFERED US
A RIDE.



THEY'VE GOT THEIR OWN BMW WITH A DRIVER AND STUFF? GEEZ, THE BIG CIRCLES ARE REALLY SOMETHING ELSE.

ENAKA-SAN IS ACTUALLY A LICENSED TAX ACCOUNTANT AND HANDLES TAX MATTERS FOR OUR DOUJIN CIRCLE.

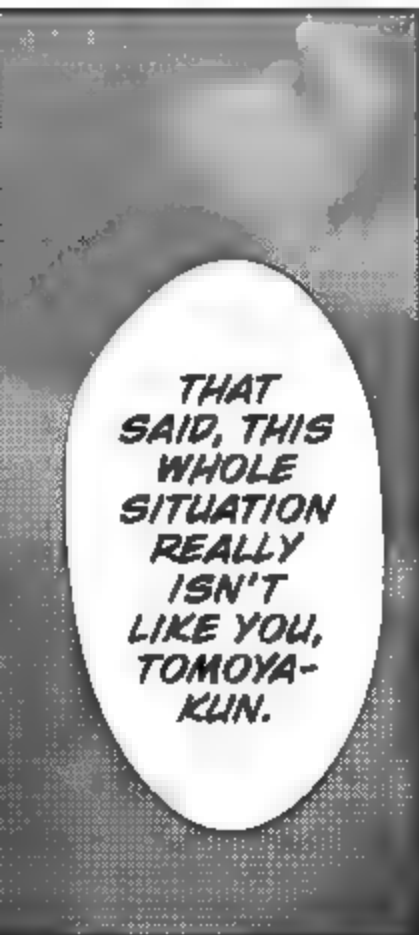
H-HI... I'M AKI.



ABOUT THE EXACT ADDRESS, HOW TO GET INTO THE RESIDENCE, ET CETERA? DO YOU HAVE ALL THE DETAILS?

SO, HAVE YOU CONTACTED SAWAMURA'S FAMILY?

...I'LL BE SURE TO CALL THEM BY THE TIME WE ARRIVE THERE.



THAT SAID, THIS WHOLE SITUATION REALLY ISN'T LIKE YOU, TOMOYA-KUN.



THANKS

SUCH ATTENTIVE-NESS...IT'S AGGRAVATING, BUT HE REALLY IS A CAPABLE GUY.

OH, ALSO, ENAKA-SAN HAS PICKED OUT A CHANGE OF CLOTHES AND UNDERWEAR.

I GOT SOME GENERIC MEDICINE TOO... BUT WHEN WE ARRIVE, WE'D BEST CALL A DOCTOR.



I'M
NOT AS
LEVEL-
HEADED
ON THE
JOB AS
YOU.

I WONDER.
I'D HAVE
THOUGHT
YOU'D MAKE
SURE THAT'S
COVERED.

YOU'D
GO TO
FRIENDS
FOR HELP
OR TRY TO
NEGOTIATE
THINGS.



I JUST
DIDN'T
EXPECT
MY ARTIST
TO GET
SICK AND
COLLAPSE.



**BUT THAT'S
EXACTLY WHY
YOU'VE SHOWN
STRENGTH IN
LAST-MINUTE
CRISES, STRENGTH
I COULD NEVER
IMAGINE. ISN'T
THAT WHY YOU'VE
COME THIS FAR?**

YOU'RE
NOT
GRACEFUL
AT ALL,
MORE
FRANTIC
AND
SWEATY.

THAT
IS
TRUE.
YOU
AND
I ARE
DIFFER-
ENT.



IF YOU
KNOW
THAT...

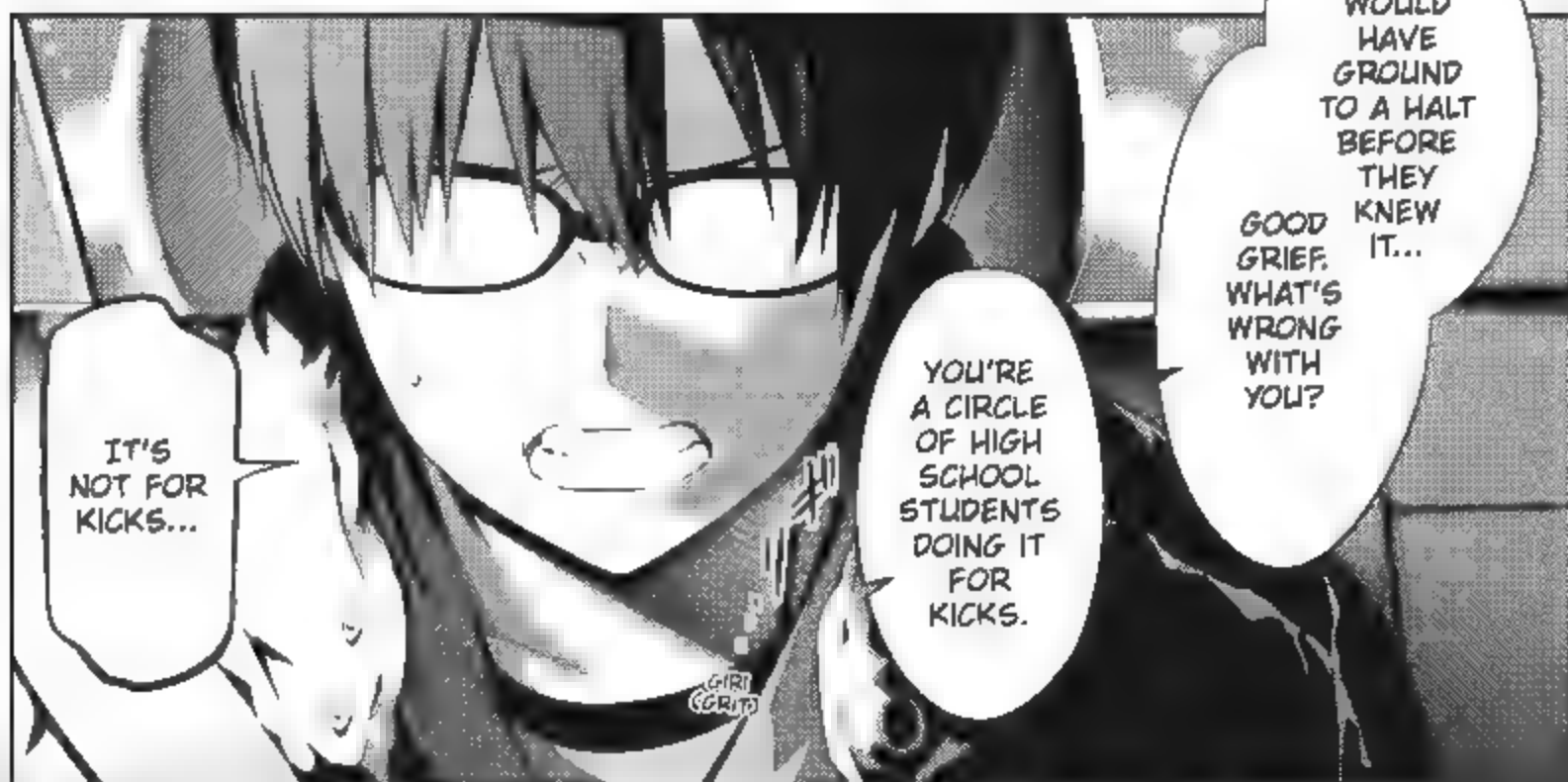


JUST
THE
SHEER
AMOUNT
OF IT
ALL.

IZUMI
TOLD ME...
ABOUT YOUR
SCENARIOS
AND MUSIC
AND EVENT
CG.



...I'M...



IT'S
NOT FOR
KICKS...

YOU'RE
A CIRCLE
OF HIGH
SCHOOL
STUDENTS
DOING IT
FOR KICKS.

GOOD
GRIEF.
WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH
YOU?

MOST
PEOPLE
WOULD
HAVE
GROUNDED
TO A HALT
BEFORE
THEY
KNEW
IT...



?

SO
WHAT'S
DIFFER-
ENT
NOW?

INDEED.
YOU'RE
ALWAYS
UNBE-
LIEVABLY
EARNEST.



YOU
SHOULD BE
DELEGATING
THAT TASK TO
YOUR OTHER
MEMBERS SO
YOU CAN STAY
AT HOME AND
WORK TOWARD
YOUR GOLD
MASTER.

THE TRUTH
IS, THIS IS NOT
THE TIME OR
PLACE TO BE
HEADING FOR
THE NASU
HIGHLAND.



...
SHE'S
SICK.
THERE'S
NO WAY
AROUND
IT.

WELL
...



BEFORE
NOW, YOU
WOULD'VE
TRIED TO
SAVE BOTH
THE GAME
AND HER.

BUT
YOU'RE
NOT
TAKING
THE BEST
POSSIBLE
OPTION!



SO GET
SOMEONE
ELSE TO
LOOK IN
ON HER...

BUT
ERIRI IS
SUFFER-
ING RIGHT
NOW!



WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH
YOU ALL
MUTUALLY
HELPING
ONE
ANOTHER
?

BUT
THEY'RE
HER
FRIENDS
TOO,
RIGHT?



I CAN'T...
I CAN'T
BURDEN
EVERYONE
ELSE 'COS
OF THAT
SELFISH
GIRL.



RIGHT
NOW,
YOU'RE NOT
LOOKING
TOWARD
WINTER
COMIKET IN
EARNEST.

WHY
DIDN'T
YOU DO
THAT?

JUST
WHAT THE
HELL ARE
YOU SO
OCCUPIED
WITH?



KATON...

I'VE...
TAKEN
ADVANTAGE
OF HER
WAY TOO
MUCH.

...GETS SHE...
ALONG
HORRIBLY
WITH
UTAHASENPAI.

IF IT
CAN'T BE
DONE, IT
CAN'T BE
DONE!

SHE COMPLETELY
HATES
MICHIRU.



WHEN IT
COMES
TO ERI
KASHIWAGI—
NO...

YOU
KNOW
WHAT
I SEE?



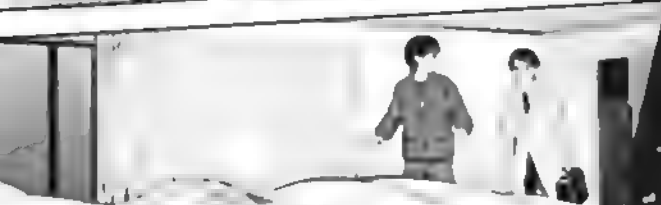
.....



One
hundred
meters
to destination.

NO
.....!

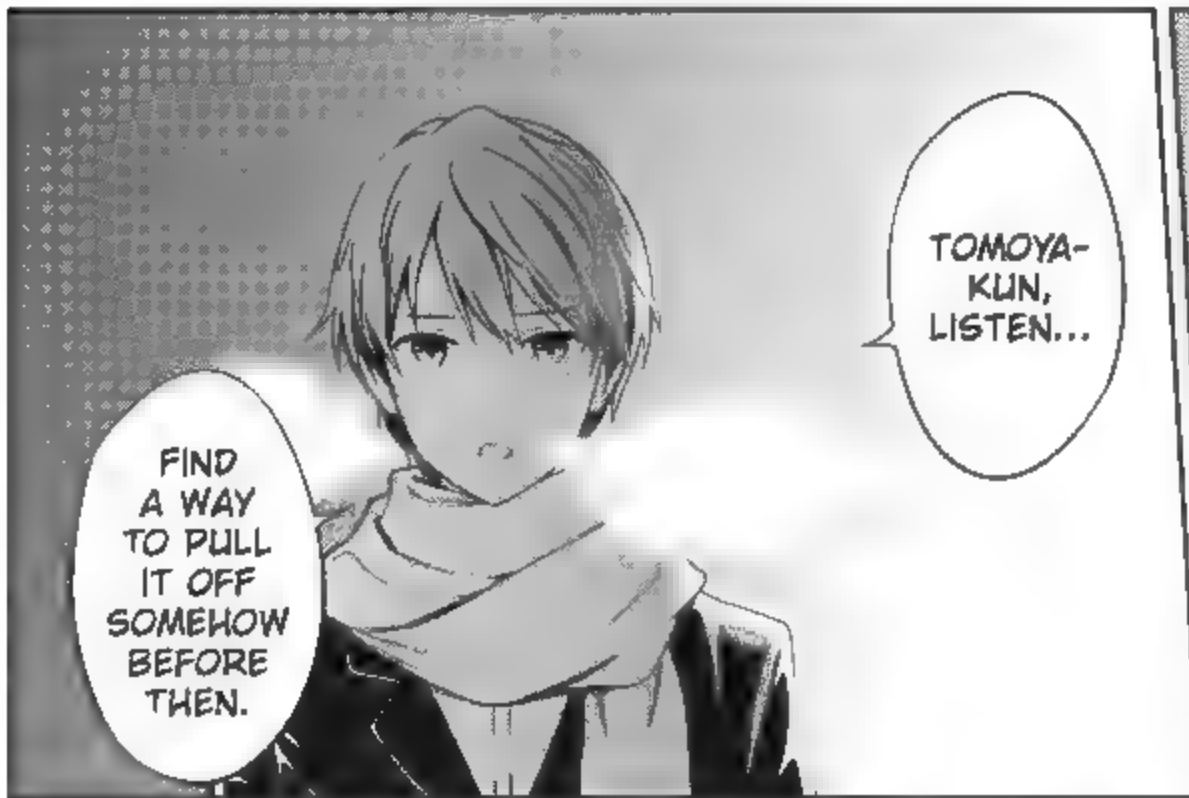
WHEN
IT COMES
TO ERI
SAWAMURA,
YOU WANT TO
KEEP HER ALL
TO YOURSELF.
THAT'S
ALL I CAN
THINK.



WELL,
THEN.

LET'S
EACH DO
OUR BEST TO
FULFILL WHAT
NEEDS TO
BE DONE.





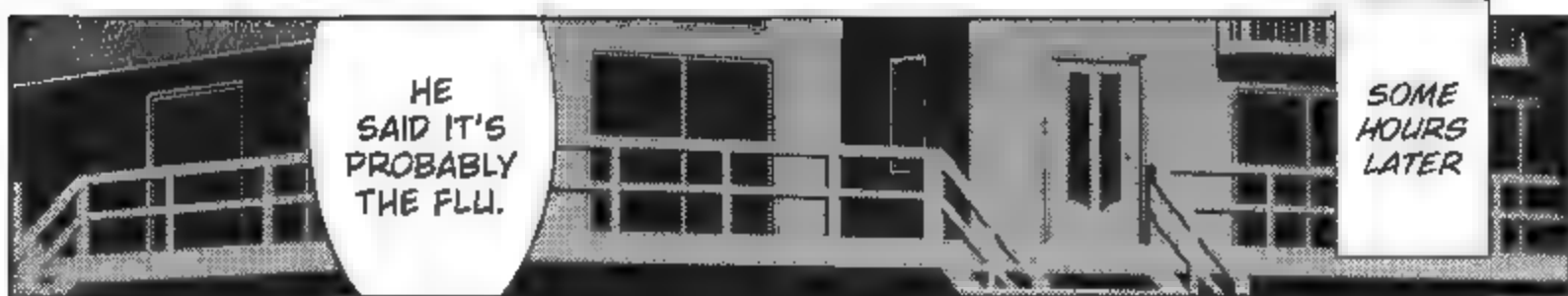


I'M
SORRY,
EVERY-
ONE.

I'M
SORRY,
KATOU.

...I'M
SORRY,
IORI.

I'M SORRY...FOR WHAT I'M ABOUT TO DO.



HE
SAID IT'S
PROBABLY
THE FLU.

SOME
HOURS
LATER



NO WAY!
THIS
IS THE
WORST!

SERI-
OUSLY
!?

YEAH. YOU
WON'T BE
ABLE TO GO
HOME FOR A
WHILE.

.....









YOU
COLLAPSED!
IF IT'S YOU'VE GOT
BETWEEN THE FLU!
A SICK
PERSON
AND A
SOFTWARE
DEAD-
LINE, IT'S
A GIVEN
WHICH I'D
CHOOSE!

ERI...!

HAKK!
AKK!

~TGT~



LEAVE...!
...FINISH
THE GAME!
SEND IT
OFF...!

GO
BACK...!
NOW...!

HFF!

~TGT~

KOFF!
KAHH!

OBVIOUSLY,
YOU HAVE
TO CHOOSE
BOTH!



GAH!

IT JUST
MEANS
A FULLY
PACKAGED
VERSION
WON'T BE
READY IN
TIME FOR
WINTER
COMIKET...

IT'S
PRACTICALLY
FINISHED.
WHAT DOES IT
MATTER WHEN
WE RELEASE
IT?

DO YOU
WANT TO
THROW
AWAY
EVERY-
ONE'S
PAST SIX
MONTHS
!?

DO YOU
WANT
TO
MAKE
MY
PAST
WEEK
MEAN
NOTH-
ING!?

HFF!
HFF!

LINH
...

AH...

~TGT~



W
A
A
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H
!

A
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!



...
ABANDONING
ERIRI HERE
AND NOW ISN'T
AN OPTION.

EVERY-
ONE...I'M
SORRY,
BUT...

AFTER THAT,
WE DIDN'T
TALK FOR
EIGHT YEARS,
SO I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT SHE
WAS LIKE
GROWING
UP.

THAT'S
WHY I HAVE
NO FAITH
IN HER
HEALTH.



WHEN SHE
WAS LITTLE,
ERIRI WAS
A SICKLY
CHILD...WHEN
I THINK BACK,
ALL THAT
COMES UP IS
HER IN HER
PAJAMAS...



...EVEN AT
CHRISTMAS
AND NEW
YEAR...

...THE
TYPE
WHO'D
SOON
WIND UP
DEAD
IF LEFT
ON HER
OWN.



'COS
ERIRI
IS...

NGH...

UURGH...

NNF...
GUH...

KH...



AND WE CAN STILL BE AT THE WINTER COMIKET. IT JUST MEANS FEWER COPIES.

WE'LL JUST BE A LITTLE BIT LATE. IT WON'T TARNISH THE VALUE OF OUR PROJECT ONE BIT.



WHOSE FAULT IS IT...!?

GUH...

VRK!
KOFF!

HEY, COME ON. THAT'S ENOUGH. STOP CRYING.



THERE'S NO NEED TO FIGHT ANYMORE.



YOUR ART HAS BECOME AMAZING...



.....
HUH?



BUT, I'LL LOSE...

...TO HER...TO IZUMI...

...TO "ROUGE EN ROUGE."



THE ART YOU DREW.

I SAW IT.



...IT
HIT THE
MARK
BETTER
THAN
ANY
OTHER.

OF
ALL
THE
ART I'VE
SEEN
FROM
YOU
THIS
YEAR...



WELL,
PROBABLY
NOBODY
BUT YOU
KNOWS HOW
YOU DID IT,
ERIRI. NO
ONE ELSE
CAN EVER
REPRODUCE
IT.

I'VE GOT
NO IDEA
HOW YOU
FUSED ALL
THESE
ELEMENTS
TOGETHER
...



IT'S GOT
A SLIGHTLY
DIFFERENT
FEEL, BUT
IT STAYS
CONSCIOUS
OF YOUR
EXISTING
FANS AND
MOE
OTAKU

THE GIRLS
ARE SO
ADORABLE, IT
SURPRISED
ME.

IT'S
REALISTIC,
AND MOE,
AND
ARTISTIC...





IT'S JUST
A BIT OF
PRAISE.
DON'T
GET SO
OVERJOYED
ABOUT IT,
IDIOT.

BUT IT
REALLY
WAS
AMAZING
...



"WHEN
IT COMES TO
ERIRI SAWAMURA,
YOU WANT TO
KEEP HER ALL
TO YOURSELF.
THAT'S ALL
I CAN THINK."

"SHE
DOESN'T
NEED TO
BORROW
STRENGTH
FROM ME
ANYMORE."

AND
YET...

"YOU LACK
TRUE TALENT!"
"BUT RIGHT NOW
YOU'RE LACKING!
YOU'RE NOT
AWESOME!"

'COS
ERIRI HAS
BECOME
BEYOND
AMAZING.

YES.
IT'S
TRUE,
IORI.

AN
EMOTION
WELLED
UP/IN ME,
SOME-
THING THE
OPPOSITE
OF "I WANT
TO SEE HER
SELL."

...AND
FURTHER
AWAY.

...FURTHER...

...YOU'RE
GETTING...

HEY...

WELL,
THAT'S
JUST THIS
DIRECTOR'S
STYLE.

I DUNNO. THE
STORY'S ALL
OVER THE
PLACE, SO
SOMETHING'S
OFF.

IS IT
SUPPOSED
TO BE A
COMEDY, OR
SERIOUS,
OR WHAT .?

CC HDDD



I'VE GOTTA GET THIS SEASON'S SHOWS OUT OF THE WAY FIRST, NO MATTER WHAT.

IF I DON'T WATCH THEM NOW, I FEEL LIKE I'LL NEVER GET TO THE LAST EPISODE AS LONG AS I LIVE.

SAY, SHALL WE WATCH THE SNOW? IT'S BEEN A WHILE. I ACTUALLY STOPPED AT EPISODE SEVEN.

SO, WHICH SHOULD WE WATCH NEXT?

WE'VE BASICALLY SEEN EVERYTHING THAT AIRED THIS WEEK.



WE DIDN'T TALK ABOUT WINTER COMIKET AGAIN.

AFTER THAT, ERIRI SLEPT FOR ABOUT FIVE HOURS. THEN, WE WATCHED ANIME NONSTOP.

YOU DOUJIN ARTISTS WHO ONLY DO BEST SELLERS ARE REALLY SOMETHING ELSE.

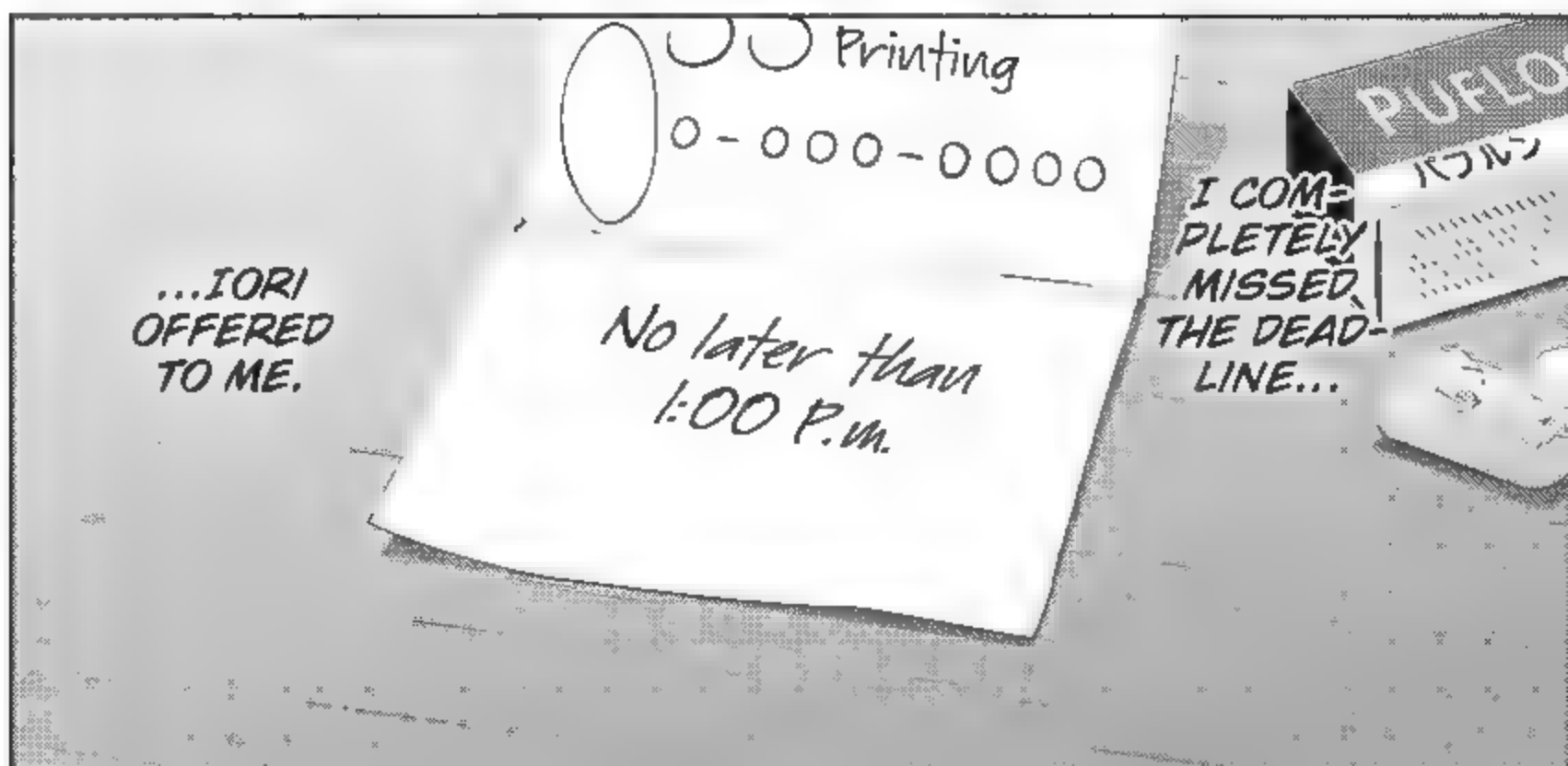
AND YET YOU DREW TWO EROTIC DOUJIN BOOKS BASED ON IT...?



1:15 P.M.



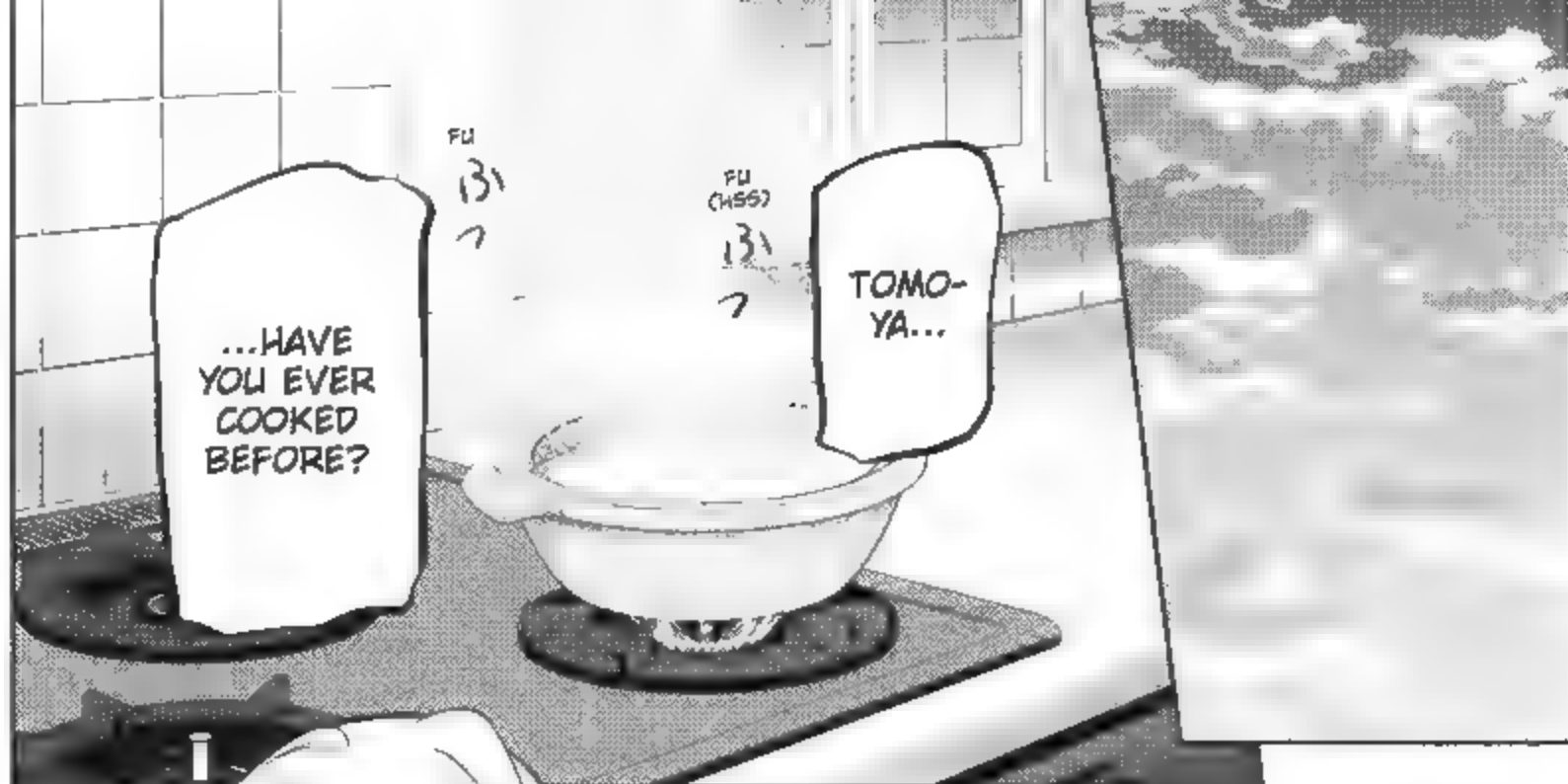
ACTUALLY, WHAT TIME IS IT NOW?



...IORI OFFERED TO ME.

No later than 1:00 P.M.

I COMPLETELY MISSED THE DEADLINE...

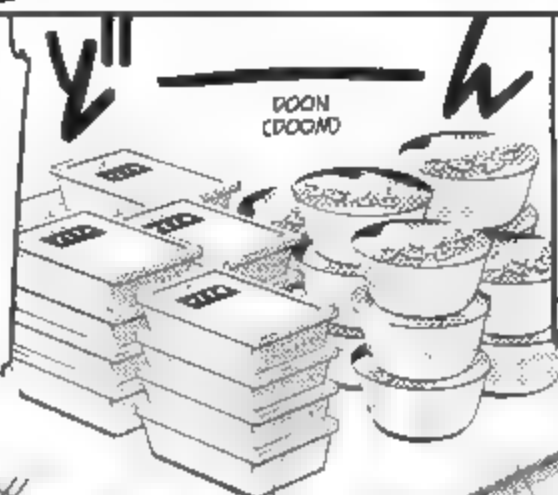


SO GET
BACK TO
YOUR ROOM
AND INTO
BED.

I'M A BIT
WORRIED
ABOUT
WHAT KIND
OF LETHAL
FOOD YOU'RE
GOING TO
MAKE US.



IT'S
ALL JUST
PEYUOG
AND
TONKOTSU
RAMEN!



AFTER
ALL,
THERE'S
STILL
PLENTY
OF FOOD
LEFT.



LABEL. GATOU MEAL







TEXT: INSTANT RESPONSE







**TOMOYA!
BREAK-
FAST!**

... LABEL: TONKOTSU.



WHO'D
EAT THAT
FIRST
THING
IN THE
MORNING?

HAKK

...DON'
WAN'
IT.



AND I
CAUGHT
IT.

DELISH!

THE
DOCTOR
WHO
VISITED
BEFORE
SAID
ERIRI
HAD "A
SIMPLE
COLD"



I've
seriously
got no
appetite

HUH? BUT
THEN, JUST
WHO WAS IT
SAYING, "A
SICK PERSON
NEEDS TO EAT
NO MATTER
WHAT"?



NIKA
(SMILE)

に
か

PUT AN
EGG IN
IT AT
LEAST...

**SURE,
SURE.**

ONCE
YOU'VE
EATEN
ALL THIS,
I'LL MAKE
YOU SOME
NABEYAKI
HOT POT
UDON! ONE
I JUST
HAVE TO
HEAT UP!

HEY.
DON'T
WE
HAVE
ANY
UDON
OR
SOBA
?

THIS
FEELING
OF WARMTH
AND SAFETY
FROM
SOMEBODY
RIGHT
BESIDE ME,
WATCHING
OVER ME.

OH...
...COME TO
THINK OF IT,
HOW LONG
HAS IT BEEN
SINCE I HAD
THIS?

DID
ERIRI...
FEEL LIKE
THIS BACK
THEN
TOO...?

SELVICE'S
CHRISTMAS EVENT
ISN'T VERY
SPECTACULAR,
IS IT.

AND
SO...

...I SPENT
SEVERAL
DAYS WITH
ERIRI...

AND
BEFORE I
REALIZED
IT, THERE
CAME A
DAY...



YOU
BECOME A
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT
PERSON WHEN
IT COMES TO
SELVICE. IT'S
SCARY...

I WON'T
FORGIVE
ANYONE WHO
DISSES
SELVICE,
NOT EVEN
YOU,
TOMOYA!

SAY
WHAT!?
WHAT
THE HELL
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT!?

THE
SEQUENCE IS
DELIBERATELY
UNIMPRESSION
SO THERE'S
ROOM FOR
THE PLAYERS'
OWN
FANTASIES!



ANYWAY,
NOTHING HAS
CHANGED AT
ALL SINCE
BACK THEN,
HUH?
BETWEEN
US.

.....



LET'S HEAD
BACK TO-
MORROW.

YEAH.

BUT
WE GOT
BETTER
IN THE
END,
DIDN'T
WE.

...
SURE.



WE HAD
COLDS. IT
COULDN'T BE
HELPED.

BACK
WHEN
YOU WERE
LITTLE,
AND NOW
TOO.

NOT
SETTING
A FOOT
OUTSIDE
MORNING
TO NIGHT,
WATCHING
ANIME,
PLAYING
VIDEO
GAMES. .



...EVEN
TO UTAHA
KASUMIGAOKA.
YOU'LL SEE.

WHEN WE
GET BACK,
I'M GOING TO
APOLOGIZE TO
EVERYONE.

TO
MEGUMI,
HYOUDOU-
SAN, AND...



SO DON'T
STRESS
ABOUT IT
TOO MUCH.

...OKAY.

I'LL
APOLOGIZE
ALONG
WITH YOU.



ERIRI...

NO. LET
ME DO IT
MYSELF.



**IT
WAS MY
FAULT...**

**BUT
IT...**



**'COS IT'S
MY CRIME,
MY RESPON-
SIBILITY...**

**I
GOT SO
OBSESSED
WITH THE
QUALITY
AND BLEW
EVERYONE
ELSE'S
GOALS...**

**AFTER ALL,
THIS WAS
THE FIRST
TIME IN MY
LIFE I EVER
MISSED A
DEADLINE...**



**...MY
PRIDE.**

**...AND
...**

WELL,
ACTUALLY,
I SHOULD
SLAP ERIRI...

...THOUGH,
IF I TOLD
THEM THAT,
EVERYBODY'D
PROBABLY
SLAP ME.

RIGHT?

...AND THEN
EVERYONE
ELSE SHOULD
SLAP ME.

TON
(THUD)

SW
(SHUFF)

?



***I'M
SORRY,
TOMOYA.***



...ON THAT
SACRED
DAY BOTH
IN THE
GAME
AND IN
REALITY...

...WE
FINALLY
MADE
AMENDS,
AFTER
EIGHT
YEARS.

■ END ■

MERRY
CHRIST-
MAS.

I'M
SORRY
...

ABOUT
WHAT?

AND FOR
HOW FAR
BACK?
I DON'T
KNOW.

AND
SO...

How to Raise a Boring Girlfriend

*DECEMBER
31.*

CHAPTER
34

*THE LAST DAY
OF THE WINTER
FESTIVAL FOR
OTAKU.*



SIGN: EAST A-34B





SEEMS
PRETTY SAD
COMPARED TO
THE OTHER
STALLS
AROUND.

I SEE...
SO THIS
IS ALL WE
HAVE.

GUH
...!

A 34a

27 部

COVER: BIJU'S ROOM



PLUS, IT'S
ON HOME-
BURNED MEDIA,
IN A PLAIN
CASE, AND THE
MANUAL IS A
SINGLE PAGE
IN BLACK AND
WHITE.

WELL,
WE ONLY
MADE
ONE
HUNDRED
COPIES
AFTER
ALL.

LRRR
...

LABEL: CHERRY BLESSING: THE TALE OF A TRAVELING BLESSING

cherry blessing

～巡る恵みの物語～

BUT TO AVOID
BEDLAM, WE
DIDN'T LIST
THE NAMES ERI
KASHIWAGI OR
UTAKO TAKI ON
THE SITE, AND
WE LIMITED IT
TO A SIMPLE
INTRODUCTION
TO THE GAME...

blessing software

WE
FINALLY
FINISHED
OUR
GAME...

ORIGI-
NALLY,
WE HAD
PLANNED
FOR
OVER A
THOU-
SAND
COPIES.



EVERYONE'S
CURIOUS
ABOUT IT...
SORRY, ALL
OF YOU...

AND
THERE ARE
RUMORS
ON THE
NET THAT
IT'S ERI
KASHIWAGI.

IT'S
HANDMADE!
LIMIT ONE!*

YEAH!
YEAH!
THE ART
LOOKS
TOTALLY
LIKE ERI
KASHI-
WAGI!



...NOW, WE'RE
ALMOST AS
BAD AS SOME
SKETCHY
CIRCLE THAT
SIMPLY
ANNOUNCED
"NEW
RELEASE
CANCELED!"
AND THEN
RAN OFF.

*ONLY ONE COPY PER CUSTOMER PER PURCHASE ALLOWED.



AND AFTER
ALL THAT
HARD WORK
YOU DID.

I'M SO
SORRY,
KATOU...



AND
IT'S NOT
JUST THE
CUSTOMERS.
IT'S A BED
OF NAILS
FOR US
SELLING
IT TOO.

TRULY...



YOU DON'T MAKE IT SOUND "DONE" OR "IN THE PAST" AT ALL. IT FEELS LIKE YOU'RE HOLDING IT AGAINST ME...

ON RESERVE

50 COPIES

WELL, WHAT'S DONE IS DONE. ALTHOUGH, WITH ALL THIS ATTENTION ON US, I DO FEEL SOME PHYSICAL DANGER FOR US SELLING IT.



OH, COME ON! IT'S IN THE PAST NOW, ISN'T IT?

AKI-KUN, YOU'VE ALREADY APOLOGIZED PLENTY.

KATOU ...



YOUR HAIR...?

BUT IF YOU FEEL THAT WAY, AKI-KUN, I WONDER IF MAYBE IT'S 'COS OF THIS.



NOT NOW.

OH. REALLY?

NO, I DIDN'T MEAN TO IMPLY ANYTHING LIKE THAT.

'COS I'M HERE WITH OUR CIRCLE!

WHY ARE YOU GOING UNDER?



I WONDER WHO YOU COULD HAVE IN MIND.

SEE, MAYBE THIS HAIR CONJURES UP THE IMAGE OF SOMEONE WHO STUBBORNLY HOLDS ON TO A GRUDGE...



CARD: KOUSAKA





I CAN
SEE HOW
STRONGLY
UTAHA-
SENPAI
CARES
ABOUT
TODAY.

INDIFFERENT
AS ALWAYS...

BUT I
KNOW
THE
TRUTH

...



AFTER
ALL,
IT'S HER
FIRST
TIME...

...
ATTENDING
A
DOUJINSHI
MARKET.



EVEN
THOUGH I
COULDN'T
EVEN GET
ENOUGH
READY TO
SELL.

KATOLI
AND
MICHIRU

...THEY
CAME
TOGETHER
FOR ME,
FOR THE
CIRCLE'S
SAKE.



IT
COULD'VE
ALL
FALLEN
APART
JUST
LIKE
THAT.

THERE
WAS ALL
THE
TROUBLE
FROM
THESE PAST
SEVERAL
DAYS.



BUT SOMEONE WITH AN OVERSIZED FIGURE AND ATTITUDE REALLY HAS A MUCH DIFFERENT PRESENCE, EH, UTAHA KASUMI-GAOKA?



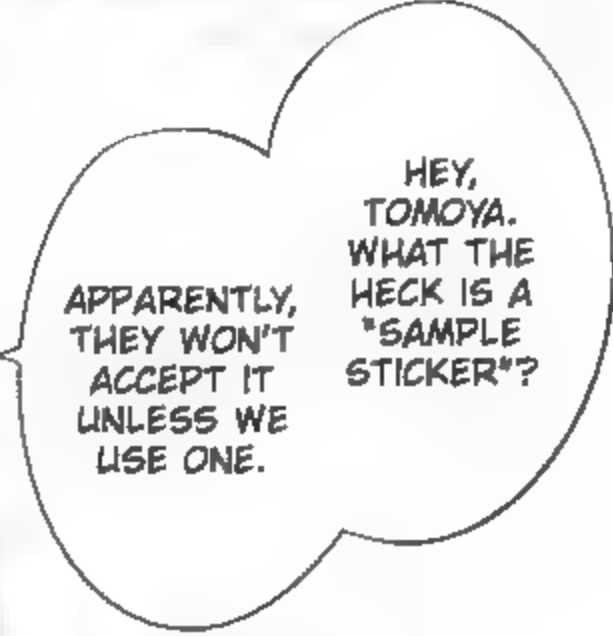
UHH...ERIRI WENT TO SUBMIT OUR REGISTRATION AND SAMPLE...



BY THE WAY, I DON'T SEE THE HARD-TO-SPOT YOU-KNOW-WHO WITH THE FLIMSY FIGURE AND FLIMSY PERSONALITY ANYWHERE.



APPARENTLY, THEY WON'T ACCEPT IT UNLESS WE USE ONE.



HEY, TOMOYA. WHAT THE HECK IS A "SAMPLE STICKER"?



TELL ME AGAIN HOW MANY EVENTS YOU'VE BEEN TO BEFORE ...?



SIGN: COFFEE SPOT. KAMEDA CAFE





**I'M
SORRY THAT
I PREVENTED
YOUR SCENARIO
FROM BEING
RELEASED TO
THE WORLD AS
A COMPLETE
GAME!**



**I'M SORRY
I STOPPED
IT FROM
BEING
RELEASED
TO A WIDER
AUDIENCE!**



**SAWA-
MURA-
SAN...**

**I'M SORRY
FOR HURTING
THE CAREER
OF UTAKO
KASUMI!!**



BUT —

...THE
"UTAKO
KASUMI"
BRAND NAME
WON'T BE
HURT BY
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS.

ACTU-
ALLY...

.....



...THE
PEN NAME
FOR THE
LOVEY-DOVEY
COLLABO-
RATION
BETWEEN
RINRI-KUN
AND ME.

PLUS,
MY CREDIT
ON THIS
PROJECT
IS "UTAKO
TAKI"...

GIRL
(GRIT)



NO! OF
COURSE
N...

OH! DID
YOU GRIND
YOUR
TEETH
JUST
NOW?



ANYWAY, YOU
COMPLETED
ALL YOUR
WORK, DIDN'T
YOU?
WE GOT
ALL THE ART
WE NEEDED
FROM YOU,
RIGHT?

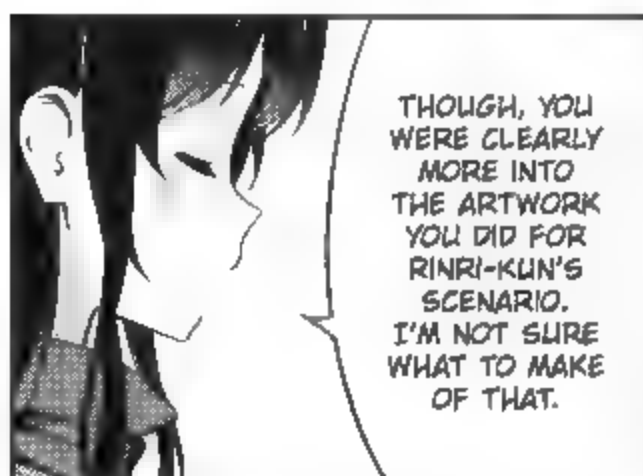


HUH!?

IN FACT,
I'M A
LITTLE BIT
IRKED BY
IT.



YES,
BUT...



THOUGH, YOU
WERE CLEARLY
MORE INTO
THE ARTWORK
YOU DID FOR
RINRI-KUN'S
SCENARIO.
I'M NOT SURE
WHAT TO MAKE
OF THAT.



U-UH,
BUT
THAT
WAS...



IT'S
JUST, YOU
TRYING TO
APPEAL TO
HIM MORE
DIRECTLY
MADE ME
CHUCKLE.

I'M
NOT
SAYING
THAT
THAT'S
BAD OR
ANY-
THING.



!
THE
QUALITY
WAS FAR
ABOVE WHAT
I'D BEEN
EXPECTING.



I'M KIND
OF HAPPY
WE WORKED
WITH THE
WRITER OF
"METRONOME
IN LOVE"...

YOUR
SCENARIO
WAS VERY
INTEREST-
ING TOO.

IT'S
SORT OF
A STRANGE
FEELING TO
SEE MY ART
ATTACHED
TO IT.



IN THAT
CASE, CAN
WE PUT
AN END
TO THIS
CONVER-
SATION?

WE BOTH
WORKED
HARD AND
PRODUCED
A FINE
WORK OF
ART.

ISN'T
THAT GOOD
ENOUGH?



IF RINRI-
KUN IS OKAY
WITH IT, THEN
I'VE GOT NO
COMPLAINTS
EITHER.



THAT'S NOT
MY FAULT.
THAT'S
UNJUSTIFIED
RESENTMENT
...

OH,
NEVER
MIND.

ONLY, NOW
I'LL HAVE TO
LIVE WITH THE
HEARTBREAK
OF THINKING,
"WHAT YOU
SAID TO HER
IS TOTALLY
DIFFERENT
THAN WHAT
YOU SAID TO
ME, YOU TWO-
TONGUED
BASTARD!"



?

ERR, WELL,
OR SHOULD
I SAY...

TH-
THANK
YOU.

WELL,
WITH THAT
SAID, NOW
CAN WE
ACTUALLY
END THIS
CONVER-
SATION...

...SAWA-
MURA-
SAN?



SINCE
WE'RE AT THIS
STAGE, I CAN
BE HONEST.
WHEN I READ
"METRONOME
IN LOVE" THE
FIRST TIME,
I—

THANK
YOU,
UTAKO
KASUMI...
SENPAI.



**WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING!?**

と — DOON
CRASH — k



**DON'T
GET SO
FULL OF
YOURSELF,
UTAH
KASUMI-
GAOKA!**

OH, AND
LET ME
WARN YOU—
I ONLY DO ONE
AUTOGRAPH
PER PERSON
AND ONLY
ON BOOKS
PURCHASED
ON-SITE,
SO...



COME. NOW.
WHAT HAPPENED
TO THAT SHY
SMILE FROM
BEFORE? THERE
WAS SOMETHING
YOU WANTED
TO SAY TO
ME, RIGHT?

DON'T
MIND ME.
PLEASE,
CONTINUE.



YOU
SEE, I...

UM, MICHIRU
HYOUDOU...

NO,
HYOUDOU-
SAN...



YOU DON'T
REALLY NEED
TO APOLOGIZE
TO ME FOR
ANYTHING.



IT'S
JUST A VIDEO
GAME, AND AN
AMATEUR ONE
TO BOOT!



BUT FOR YOU,
THIS GAME IS
YOUR DEBUT AS
A SONGWRITER.

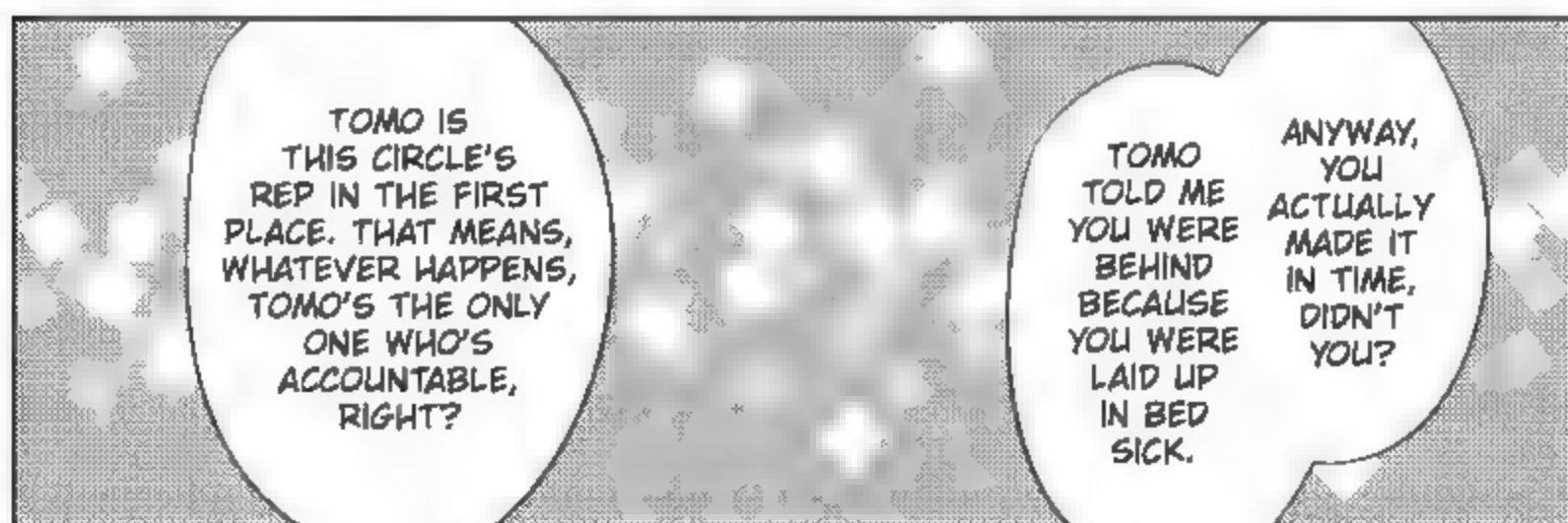


I DON'T
HAVE ANY
INTEREST
IN OTAKU
CRAP...

...WELL,
I'M ONLY
SPEAKING
FROM
MY OWN
EXPERI-
ENCE.

...EVEN
IF IT'S A
DOUJIN
WORK.

BUT
THE FIRST
WORK YOU
PUT OUT
INTO THE
WORLD IS
ONE OF THE
TREASURES
OF YOUR
LIFETIME...



TOMO IS
THIS CIRCLE'S
REP IN THE FIRST
PLACE. THAT MEANS,
WHATEVER HAPPENS,
TOMO'S THE ONLY
ONE WHO'S
ACCOUNTABLE,
RIGHT?

TOMO
TOLD ME
YOU WERE
BEHIND
BECAUSE
YOU WERE
LAID UP
IN BED
SICK.

ANYWAY,
YOU
ACTUALLY
MADE IT
IN TIME,
DIDN'T
YOU?



IT'S LIKE
YOU'RE
FORCING THE
IDEA THAT
YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO'S
CLOSEST
TO TOMO.

NO.
THAT
DOESN'T
FEEL
RIGHT
TO ME.

H-HOW
COME?

...THAT
SOMEHOW
MAKES
IT SOUND
WORSE!



EVEN SO,
MY ONLY
CHOICE IS TO
APOLOGIZE
FOR THIS
INCIDENT.

...I
WASN'T
IMPLYING
THAT AT
ALL...

I AM
SORRY,
HYOUDOU-
SAN...

EXACTLY.
TOMO DOESN'T
BELONG TO
YOU, AND THAT'S
WHY YOU'VE
GOT THE
WRONG IDEA.



I KEEP
TELLING YOU—
THERE'S NO
POINT IN
APOLOGIZING!

PORI
!!

? PORI
(SCRATCH)
!!



WHA
...!?

BUT
I DON'T
INTEND TO
APOLOGIZE
FOR
ANYTHING
ELSE!



AS IF
HE'LL
BE THAT
CLOSE
WITH SOME
COUSIN HE
ONLY SEES
ONCE A
YEAR!

I'M NOT
INTERESTED
IN FRUITLESS
ARGUMENTS
ABOUT WHO'S
CLOSEST OR
FURTHEST OR
WHATEVER!



WAIT, WAIT, WAIT!
YOU SAID YOU
DIDN'T WANT TO
BUTT HEADS, BUT
YOU'RE REALLY
ARGUING YOUR
CASE HERE!



WHAT!?
IS THAT
WHY YOU
THINK YOU
HAVE THE
EDGE?

ANYWAY,
"CHILDHOOD
FRIENDS"
ARE
ALMOST ALL
PATHETIC
LOSER
TYPES!

BUT IN
THE END, A
COUSIN IS
A RELATIVE,
RIGHT?
ISN'T IT
MISGUIDED
TO
COMPARE
THAT TO A
GENUINE
CHILDHOOD
FRIEND?

IF YOU'D LIVED
TOGETHER SINCE
WAY BACK, THEN
MAYBE I COULD
UNDERSTAND IT.

A black and white manga panel showing two young women with short hair. The one in the foreground is looking up with a surprised expression, while the one behind her is also looking up with a similar expression.

**OH? REALLY?
YOU SURE
THAT'S
NOT JUST
TOMOYA'S
INFLUENCE?**

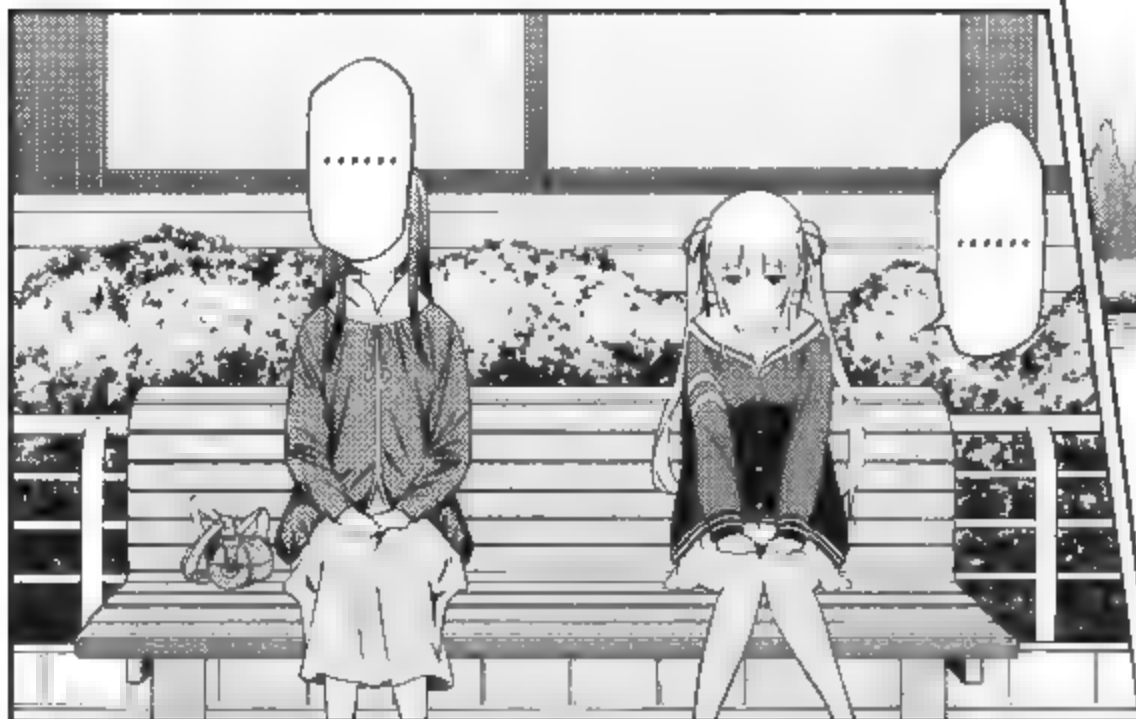
**I'VE
LEARNED A
FEW THINGS!
SO I COULD
GET ALONG
WITH YOU
OTAKU!**

**THAT'LL
COME BACK
TO BITE YOU
IN THE ASS!
WEREN'T
YOU A NON-
OTAKU!?**

A large black and white manga panel featuring a close-up of two young women. They both have wide, shocked eyes and open mouths. The woman on the right is slightly more in focus than the one on the left.

**DON'T
CALL
ME THAT!
I'M ERIRI
TO YOU!**

**HANG ON!
DID YOU
ACTUALLY
MEAN IT
WHEN YOU
SAID
"SORRY,"
ERIRIN!?**



SHINSHIN
(WUSH)

.....

I'M
SORRY,
MEGUMI.

ER,
UHM...

...THERE'S
NOTHING TO
APOLOGIZE
FOR.

UHH,
WHEN YOU
SAY THOSE IN
A ROW LIKE
THAT, IT'S
ASKING FOR
TROUBLE.

I KNOW
YOU DID
IT FOR
YOURSELF,
THEN FOR
TOMOYA,
THEN FOR
ALL OF
US.

...WELL,
SEEING AS
I WAS THE
MODEL FOR
THE HEROINE
OF THIS
WHOLE
PROJECT,
IT KINDA
STUNG.

I KNOW
HOW IMPORTANT
THIS CIRCLE AND
THIS PROJECT
WERE TO YOU,
MEGUMI.



**YOU
CONNECTED
EVERYONE
TOGETHER.
AND COMPARED
TO ALL-TALK,
NO-ACTION
TOMOYA, YOU
THOUGHT OF
THE CIRCLE
WAY MORE.**



**...SO
I'M
SORRY.**



**WE
WATCHED
ANIME,
PLAYED
VIDEO
GAMES,
AND
SLEPT
THE
WHOLE
TIME.**

**NOTHING
GREAT...**

**SO HOW
WAS THE
VACATION
HOUSE?**

**UM.
ERR...
IT'D BE
TROUBLE
TO CARE
ABOUT
THAT
PART.**



**ALL
RIGHT.
I
ACCEPT.**

**GOTCHA.
SORRY.**



...I
FIGURE
THERE'S
NOTHING
TO WORRY
ABOUT
ON THAT
FRONT.

YEAH.
WELL...



YOU
...
...THINK
SO?



HEY,
YOU CAN
GO AHEAD
AND SAY IT,
BUT I WON'T
HAVE A
DECENT
RESPONSE,
OKAY?

'COS
I...
I...



OOP!
HERE IT
COMES
...

MEGUMI,
WHAT DO
YOU THINK
ABOUT
TOMOYA?



OH?
ARE YOU
FINE WITH
THAT?

YEAH.
WELL...
YOU'RE
DEAR TO
ME TOO,
MEGUMI.

WELL,
I THINK
WE CAN
BOTH
BE YOUR
FRIENDS
THERE...



RIGHT
NOW, IT'S
ENOUGH
IF HE'S
MY DEAR
FRIEND.

I WANT
HIM TO BE
A DEAR
FRIEND.

NO.



GETTING
TOGETHER
WHEN WE CAN,
RELAXING AND
HAVING FUN,
WORKING OUR
BUTTS OFF ON
THE GAME...

THAT'S
WHY, RIGHT
NOW, I'M
HAPPY TO
KEEP ON
ENJOYING
MY DAYS
WITH ALL
OF YOU.

LATELY,
I'VE COME
TO THINK
THAT'S A
DECENT
OPTION
TOO.



WELL,
MAYBE
THIS
IS NEW
GROUND
FOR ERI
KASHIWAGI
?

W — — —
NNNGH....!

...ERIRI,
YOU'VE
CHANGED
A BIT,
HAVEN'T
YOU?



I FORESEE
A BIG BREAK
FOR ERI
KASHIWAGI!

THANKS!
I THOUGHT
SO TOO.

...THOSE
LAST PIECES
YOU MADE
WERE THE
BEST!













CHAPTER
35



The
00th
Comic
Market
is now
open.

PINDONPAAN
(DING-DONG)

PACHI
(CLAP)

PACH

PACHI

PACHI

PACHI

PACHI

PACH

PACH



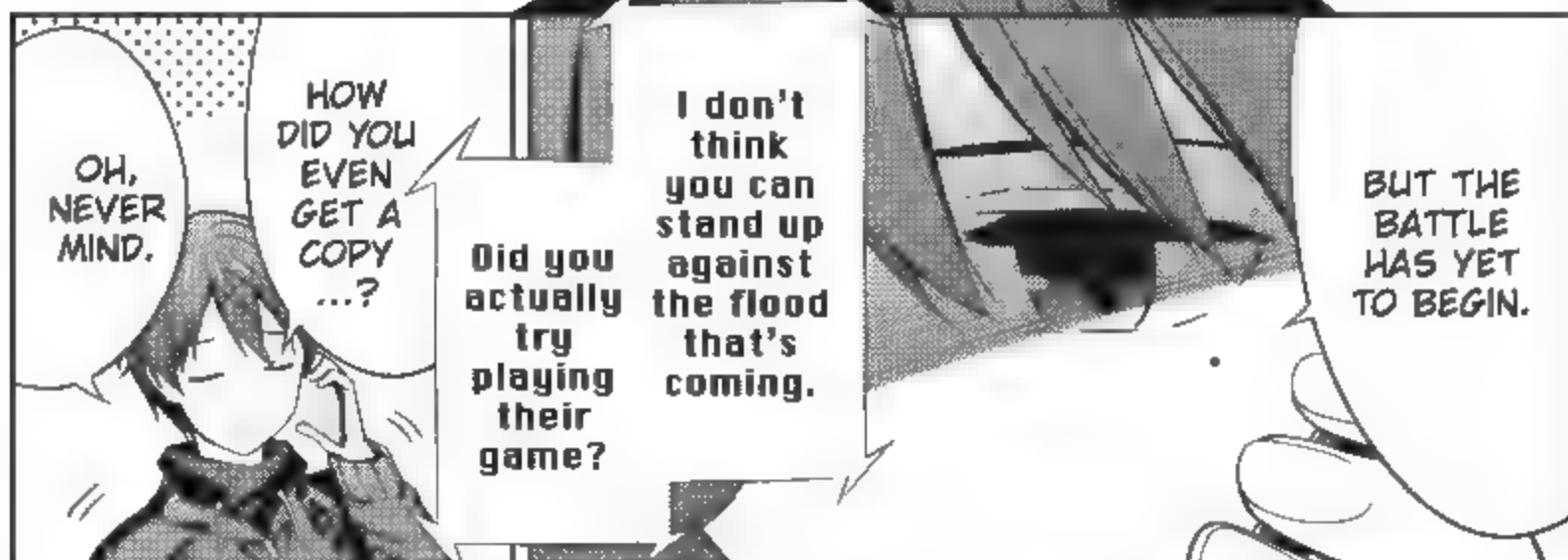
SIGN: GENERAL HQ





So
in the
end,
you
lost...

...Iori.



I WANTED TO
CRUSH THEM
WHILE UNDER
THE SAME
CONDITIONS.

What
they've
produced
isn't
anything
simple.



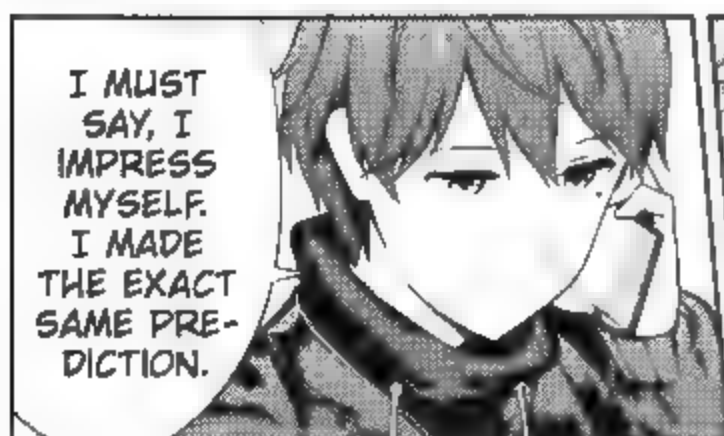
...SO
NAIVE THEY
SHOULD GIVE
YOU A SPECIAL
THANKS IN THE
CREDITS.

**YOU'RE
FAR TOO
NAIVE,
IORI...**



EVERY-
ONE'S
DONE A
GREAT
JOB.

IZUMI'S
GIVEN IT
HER ALL
TOO.



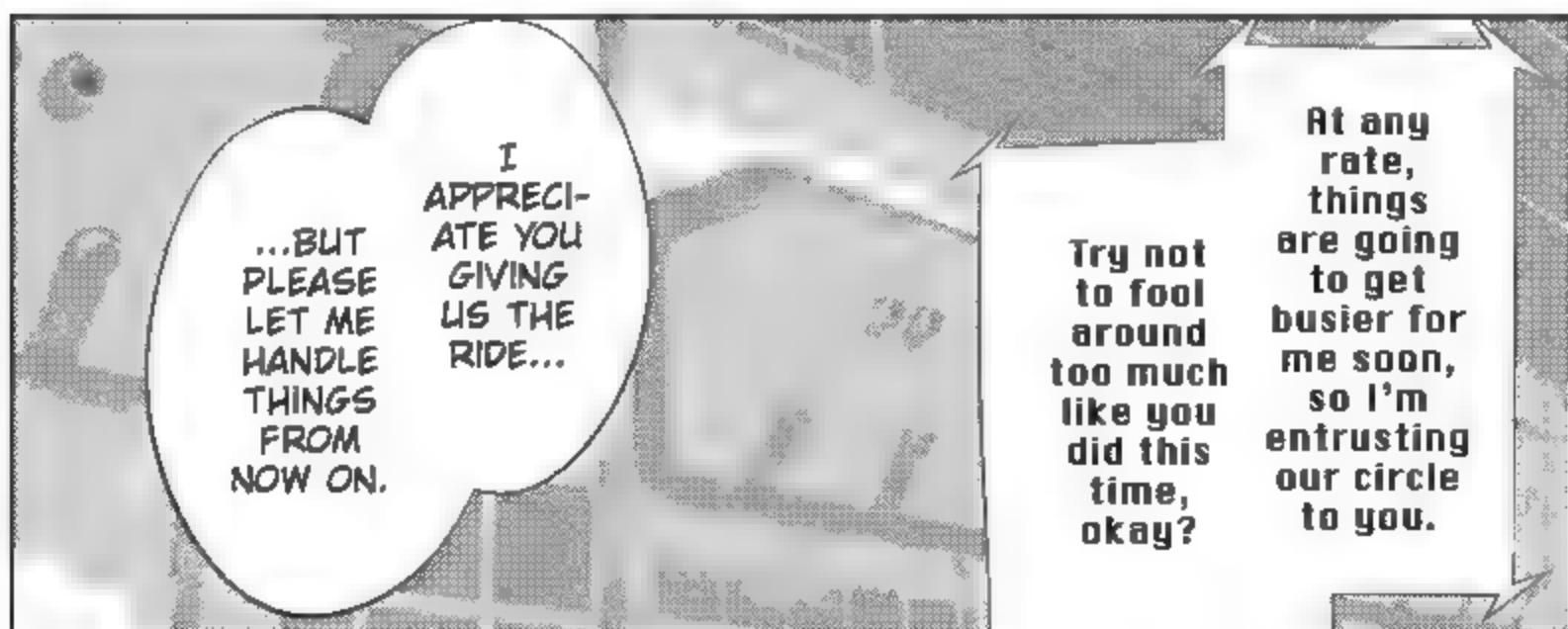
I MUST
SAY, I
IMPRESS
MYSELF.
I MADE
THE EXACT
SAME PRE-
DICTION.



It was
at least a
year too
soon for
something
like this.

THANK
YOU
VERY
MUCH!

About
your
sister...



...BUT
PLEASE
LET ME
HANDLE
THINGS
FROM
NOW ON.

I
APPRECI-
ATE YOU
GIVING
US THE
RIDE...

Try not
to fool
around
too much
like you
did this
time,
okay?

At any
rate,
things
are going
to get
busier for
me soon,
so I'm
entrusting
our circle
to you.



I'D
BETTER
GET BACK
TO OUR
TABLE
NOW...

...WELL,
THAT
DEPENDS
ON YOU,
DOESN'T
IT?



If
you'll
excuse
me...

...Akane-
san.



HEY, TOMO!
SHOULD WE
TAKE THE
RINKAI LINE?

GAYA
や
や

GAYA
(CHATTER)
や
や

HMM...

OR SHOULD
WE TAKE THE
YURIKAMOME?

WHAT
SHE
SAID!

I CAN'T
WALK
ANOTHER
STEP!

YOU KNOW,
YOU TWO ARE
REAL KINDRED
SPIRITS WHEN
IT COMES TO
LAZINESS.

HOW ABOUT
WE GO GET
SOME TEA
FOR NOW?
WHERE TO
GO...?

WE
ENDED UP
SELLING
OUT IN
UNDER
THIRTY
MINUTES
...





KATOU!
THERE
YOU
ARE.

YOU DIDN'T
HAVE TO
COME BACK
FOR ME.



IT'S
FINE.

BUT I'M
USED TO
THEM.

CAN
I TAKE
THAT
FOR
YOU?

YOUR
OWN CASE
IS EVEN
BIGGER,
THOUGH,
AKI-KUN.

OH,
OKAY.





BY THE WAY,
I SAW THE
WEBSITE. THE
ART...COULD IT
BE...?

WE'RE
SOLD OUT!
I'M SORRY!

WHEN I
TALKED ABOUT
OUR PLANS TO
SELL THROUGH
SHOPS, MOST
PEOPLE
ACCEPTED IT,
AND SOME OF
THEM WERE
HAPPY FOR
US...

AND WHEN
THE PEOPLE WHO
PLAY IT REALIZE
THE TRUE IDENTITY
OF THE SCENARIO
WRITER, WE MIGHT
END UP WITH AN
EVEN BIGGER RUSH
OF CUSTOMERS.

...BUT SOME
JUST ASKED
STRAIGHT UP,
"THIS ART
MUST BE BY
ERI KASHIWAGI,
RIGHT!?"



IF IT
HADN'T BEEN
FOR YOU,
KATOU, WE
WOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN
ABLE TO
TURN UP
FOR THE
WINTER
COMIKET
AT ALL.



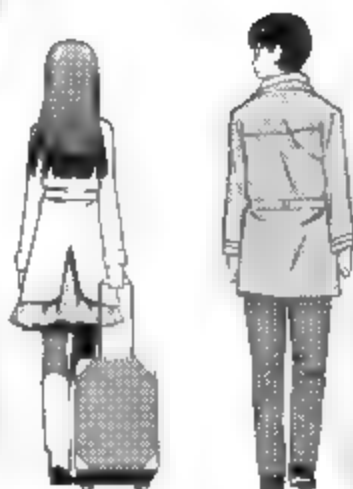
THANKS FOR
EVERYTHING,
SERIOUSLY.



IT
WAS NO
BIG DEAL,
REALLY.



**SHE'S A
RARE FRIEND
TO COME
BY, A MAIN
HEROINE,
AND MORE...**



**KIND AS
ALWAYS,
HER
FLATNESS
LETTING
IT CALMLY
FLOW
PAST HER.**

**WE'RE GOING
TO ODAIBA,
SO WE NEED
TO TAKE THE
YURIKAMOME.**

**OH!
HOLD ON,
KATOU.
IT'S THIS
WAY.**

**I'M
HEADING
HOME FOR
THE DAY.**



HUH?

SO I'M
HEADED
FOR THE
RINKAI
LINE.

I'LL BE
SEEING YOU,
AKI-KUN.





**THAT'S
WHERE
YOU'RE
WRONG,
AKI-KUN!**



...I'VE
HEARD
KATOU'S
VOICE
LIKE
THAT...

THIS
IS THE
FIRST
TIME...



THERE'S
NO POINT IN
APOLOGIZING
TO ME ABOUT
US NOT
MAKING IT
IN TIME.

THAT'S
NOT IT...
THAT'S
NOT THE
ISSUE.



WHAT
DO
YOU
MEAN?







CONSULT
WITH
YOU...?



WHY DIDN'T
YOU TALK TO
ME ABOUT
ANY OF IT?

ABOUT THE
DEADLINE,
ABOUT ERIRI,
AND ABOUT
WHAT WE CUT
BACK FOR
THE WINTER
COMIKET.



YOU WENT
TO ERIRI ON
YOUR OWN,
YOU DECIDED
TO GIVE UP ON
YOUR OWN, AND
YOU BORE THE
BURDEN ON
YOUR OWN.

I WOULD
HAVE MADE
THE SAME
DECISIONS
YOU DID,
AKI-KUN.

AND YET
YOU NEVER
TALKED TO
ME ABOUT
ANY OF IT.

I
WOULDN'T
HAVE
GONE
... AGAINST
ABOUT PUTTING YOU...
ERIRI
FIRST AND
FORGETTING
ABOUT THE
WINTER
COMIKET.



DID YOU
THINK
I WOULD
TELL YOU TO
PUT WINTER
COMIKET
AHEAD OF
ERIRI?

DID YOU
THINK THAT
I WOULDN'T
AGREE TO
ANY OF THAT,
AKI-KUN?

'COS IF
YOU DID...
IT KIND
OF...

...
UPSETS
ME.



AND I DO
THINK OF
YOU AS MY
FRIEND.

GARA
(TWO)

I BELIEVE
YOU MADE
THE RIGHT
CHOICES,
AKI-KUN.

KATOU DOES NOT CRY...

IT'S 'COS
I CONSIDER
YOU A FRIEND
THAT I STILL
CAN'T DIGEST
WHAT YOU
DID.

BUT
I CAN'T
FORGIVE
YOU.

...MUCH LESS CRY LIKE ERIRI DOES. AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHY...

I'M ACTING
JUST LIKE
RURI RIGHT
NOW.

...I'M
SORRY.

ODD.
SOMETHING'S
DIFFERENT
ABOUT ME.

**...HER FIRST REBELLION
CAUSED A DULL PAIN,
LIKE BEING PRICKED BY A
POINTED TREE BRANCH.**

END



WHY
ARE YOU
APOLO-
GIZING
...?

I'M
THE
ONE...



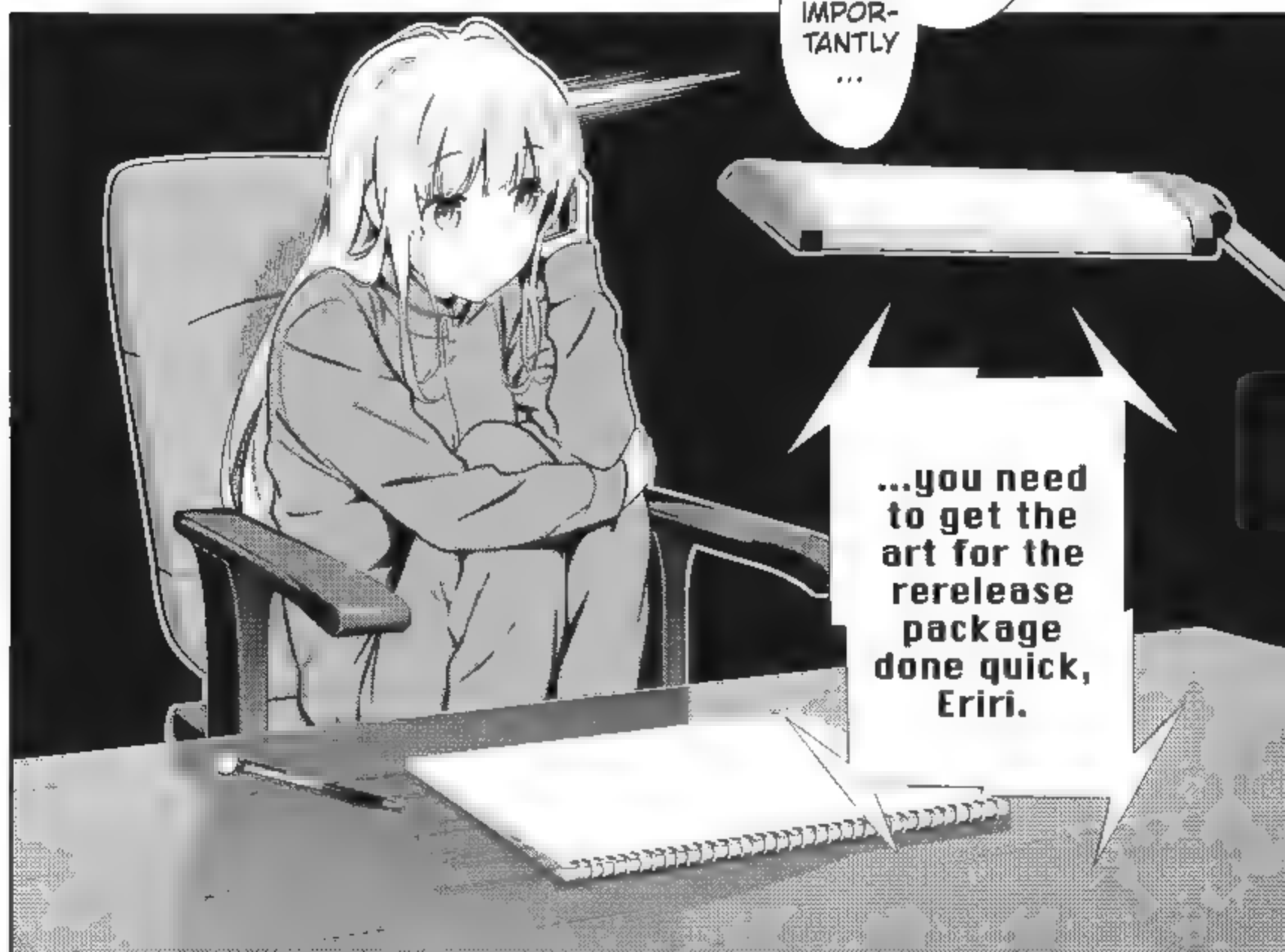
...WHO
SHOULD BE
SAYING THAT,
HUNDREDS
OF TIMES
OVER.

CHAPTER
36



*AND SO
CAME THE
NEW YEAR,
FOLLOWED BY
FEBRUARY.*







DO WE
REALLY NEED A
NEW PACKAGE
FOR THE
RERELEASE?

...LISTEN,
TOMOYA.



IT'S BEEN
MORE THAN A
MONTH SINCE
THE WINTER
COMIKET AND
EVERY DAY IS
STILL AS BUSY
AS EVER.

Well,
that's
true,
but...

YOU'RE
THE ONE
WHO SAID
YOU WANTED
TO DO IT!

AS
THANKS
FOR THE
FIRST
EDITION
SELLING
OUT.

20XX/XX/XX (Sat) XX:XX



The balance of the figures, the interpretation...The feel is somewhat altered, but any way you look at it, this has to be by Eri Kashiwagi!

I'm convinced they used a pro writer using a penname. But I just can't figure out who...Hm. But I feel like I've read this person's stuff somewhere before.

Category: Doujin

AROUND LAST
YEAR'S END AND
THE NEW YEAR,
THE CONTENTS
OF OUR GAME
AND ITS DEGREE
OF POLISH
BECAME A HOT
TOPIC ON THE
NET.

No. 256 (no subject)
Anonymous 20XX/XX/XX XX:XX
Doujin games have gotten really sophisticated lately. I really like the person who did the vocals on this. The background music is really atmospheric too. It alone almost brought me to tears.

No. 257 (no subject)
Anonymous 20XX/XX/XX XX:XX

AND THE
THOUSAND
COPIES WE SOLD
WHOLESALE TO
DOUJIN SHOPS
SOLD OUT ON
THE SAME
DAY, SO WE
PROMPTLY GOT
ORDERS FOR AN
ADDITIONAL
FIVE THOUSAND
UNITS.

とらのほたて

THERE
WERE SO MANY
ARGUMENTS
FOR AND
AGAINST THE
GRAND ROUTE,
CAUSING EVEN
MORE DEBATE
EVERY DAY
THERE WERE
PEOPLE
WRITING ABOUT
CHERRY
BLESSING.

SIGN: TORANO HANA

I WENT
TO ALL THE
TROUBLE OF
DEVELOPING
A NEW STYLE,
AFTER ALL!

THIS
OLD ART
EMBAR-
RASSES
ME.

FOR THOSE,
ERIRI SAID
SHE WANTED
TO DO A
"THANK YOU
FOR MAKING
US A MAJOR
HIT" RE-
RELEASE
PACKAGE.

Once I'm done with this artwork, how about we go somewhere for fun?

Hey, Tomo-ya.

YEAH?

Okay.

NO. I'LL JUST TRY A LITTLE HARDER.

IS THE DEADLINE TOO TIGHT? IT'S JUST A STORE ORDER. WE CAN ALWAYS PUSH IT BACK, YOU KNOW?

Anyway, do you want to go or not?

THAT'S WAY TOO LOW A FREQUENCY...

I do get the urge to go out sometimes, about once a year.

WELL, AS LONG AS ACTUALLY GOING OUTSIDE ISN'T TOO MUCH OF A HASSLE FOR YOU.

Rh-ha-ha! Of course!

I'LL PASS ON THE NASU HIGHLAND, THANKS.

ONCE YOU ARE, WE CAN HANG OUT IN AKIHABARA OR THE NASU HIGHLAND.

WELL, EITHER WAY, IT'S NOT HAPPENING UNTIL AFTER YOU'RE DONE.



COME TO
THINK OF IT,
I'VE BEEN
PHONING
ERIRI ABOUT
ONCE EVERY
OTHER DAY.



OKAY,
LATER.



Well,
that's
about it
for me.
See ya.



HNGH!

THESE
MEMBERS
WILL
CREATE A
NEW WORK
AGAIN
SOMEDAY!

HMF!

...BUT
IT'LL KEEP
GOING,
AND IT'LL
BE FUN.

OUR
CIRCLE
STILL HAS
LOTS OF
ISSUES...

DESPITE
ALL THAT'S
HAPPENED...
WE CAN
JUST CHAT
NOW, LIKE
THIS.



STRANGE
...

I COULD
DRAW
BEFORE,
BUT...







OH,
BY THE
WAY,
ERIRI....

ABOUT YOUR
PROGRESS ON
THE PACKAGE ART...
SEE, IF YOU DON'T
COME UP WITH THE
ROUGHS SOMETIME
SOON, THINGS
COULD GET DICEY...

HM?



...LISTEN.
DON'T BE
WRITING
MY NAME
IN ANY EVIL
NOTEBOOKS,
OKAY?
SWEAR IT!

I DON'T
EVER
WANT TO
DO THAT
AGAIN!
I FEEL
LIKE THAT
HALVED MY
LIFE SPAN!



YOU DID
TWELVE
PIECES IN
THE WEEK
BEFORE WE
DID THE
MASTER.
THIS IS
SLOW FOR
YOU.

...AH,
I KNOW.

...YEAH.
I REALLY DO
UNDERSTAND.



YUP!
LEAVE IT
TO ME!

I'LL
HAVE IT
DONE BY
THE END
OF THIS
WEEK,
LICKETY-
SPLIT!

WELL,
ANYWAY,
JUST
A BIT
LONGER.

AFTER ALL,
RIGHT NOW, I'M
SATISFIED BOTH
PUBLICLY AND
PRIVATELY!

WHAT
THE—?
PRIVATELY
?

...I
BELIEVE
YOU,
OKAY?



COLD AGAIN TODAY, HUH...?

?



TURNSTILE: IC CARDS ONLY



FIVE METERS BEYOND THE RADIUS OF YOU TWO ANYWAY.

SAWA (CALIPRAWR)



H-HOW RARE FOR HER TO SPEAK TO ME IN PUBLIC!

JIRO (STARE)
うん うん うん

IT'S Sawamura-san So she really is friends with the otaku.

FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN KASUMI-GAOKA LOOKING FRIENDLY.

..... IS THIS GLOOMY GIRL STANDING HERE WAITING JUST SO SHE CAN GET IN OUR WAY?



YOU'VE NEVER
WALKED TO
SCHOOL WITH
TOMOYA!

BUT
WE'LL
BE
PARTING
PRETTY
SOON,
RINRI-
KUN.

UTAHA-
SENPAI
.....

...WITH
YOU.

SO, ONE
LAST TIME,
I WANTED TO
MORE DEEPLY
ENGRAVE INTO
MY MIND THE
MEMORY OF
WALKING THE
SAME ROAD
TOGETHER
FOR THE PAST
THREE YEARS...



...YOU
GUYS'LL BE
SEPARATED
SOON, SO IT'S
ABOUT TIME
YOU TRIED TO
BE FRIENDLY.

WHAT
!?

AND YET,
YOU'RE
STILL GOING
TO FUSS
ABOUT
SOME-
THING THAT
SMALL?
YOU'RE
SUCH A
CHILD.

NOR
DID YOU
UNTIL
JUST
RECENTLY,
RIGHT?



PEOPLE
ARE
STARING
LIKE
CRAZY...!

OH, THAT'S
UPSETTING. AREN'T
WE COMRADES IN
A VOLUNTEER
CIRCLE? AND YET,
YOU DIVIDE OUR
DUTIES LIKE WE'RE
COMPLETELY
SEPARATE
MINISTRIES. HOW
SAD...

JIRO
(STARES)

3

ZAWA

(CALIBURKURO)

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3



SO,
SAWAMURA-
SAN, HAVE
YOU FINISHED
THE NEW
PACKAGE?



.....!
I DON'T
NEED TO
ANSWER
TO A MERE
SCENARIO
CHIEF!

**QUIT
MAKING
A SOUND
ARGUMENT
JUST TO
MESS WITH
ME WHEN
I'M IN
TROUBLE!
YOU DON'T
EVEN
BELIEVE
WHAT
YOU'RE
SAYING!**

**WE ALL
SHARE OUR
TROUBLES,
AND WE ALL
REJOICE IN OUR
SUCCESSSES.
THAT'S THE
TRUE JOY OF
BEING IN A
DOUJIN GROUP,
ISN'T IT?**

GYU
(SQUISH)

GYU
(SQUEEZE)

GYU

**HEY,
YOU TWO!
EVERY-
BODY'S
STARING!**

**THE WAY
THEY'RE
SANDWICHING
ME IN WHILE
THEY ARGUE...
THIS HAS TO
LOOK LIKE...!**

**HEY,
TOMOYA!**



UGH,
THIS IS
SUCH A
PAIN...!

LATELY,
THE MERE
FACT THAT
YOU'VE BEEN
SEEN WITH
SAWAMURA-
SAN HAS THE
WHOLE SCHOOL
TALKING,
AND NOW
KASUMIGAOKA-
SENPAI
TODAY TOO!?

JUST
WHAT THE
HELL WAS
THAT THIS
MORNING
!?



PLUS...

WELL,
EVEN IF I
TRIED TO
EXPLAIN OUR
RELATION-
SHIP, NO
ONE WOULD
BELIEVE
IT. PLUS, IT
WOULD HURT
THEIR
REPUTA-
TIONS.

↓YAWN↑

YOU'RE
NOT GOING
TO SAY A
WORD,
ARE YOU?

YOSHIHIKO,
EVEN IF
I COULD TALK,
I WOULDN'T
WANT TO. YOU
SEE, PEOPLE
HAVE DUTIES
WHICH THEY
MUST UPHOLD
AT ALL TIMES.



...OH!





...AND SHE LEAVES WITHIN A MINUTE OF CLASSES ENDING, ALWAYS WITHOUT FAIL, SINCE THE START OF THE YEAR.

SHE ARRIVES AT SCHOOL JUST ONE MINUTE BEFORE THE FIRST BELL...

...RIGHT.

SO SHE'LL LIKELY SKIP THE CIRCLE MEETING AGAIN.

ALL TOO CLEARLY, SHE'S DELIBERATELY REBELLING.



BUT I DON'T KNOW WHY THIS HURTS ME SO MUCH...

GARI (SCRATCH)

GARI

I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT...WELL, KATOLI'S A HARD TO UNDERSTAND CHARACTER-TYPE...



THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG!



H-HEY...



I-I'M SORRY FOR COMING BY SO LATE EVEN THOUGH WE'VE GOT SCHOOL TOMORROW.

IT'S FINE. I WAS GOING TO STAY UP UNTIL ALL THE LATE-NIGHT ANIME AIRED ANYWAY.



SO? WHAT'S UP?

U-UMM...

THE THING IS, SEE...

MOJI (FIDGET)

もぢ

E-EVENING.

MOJI

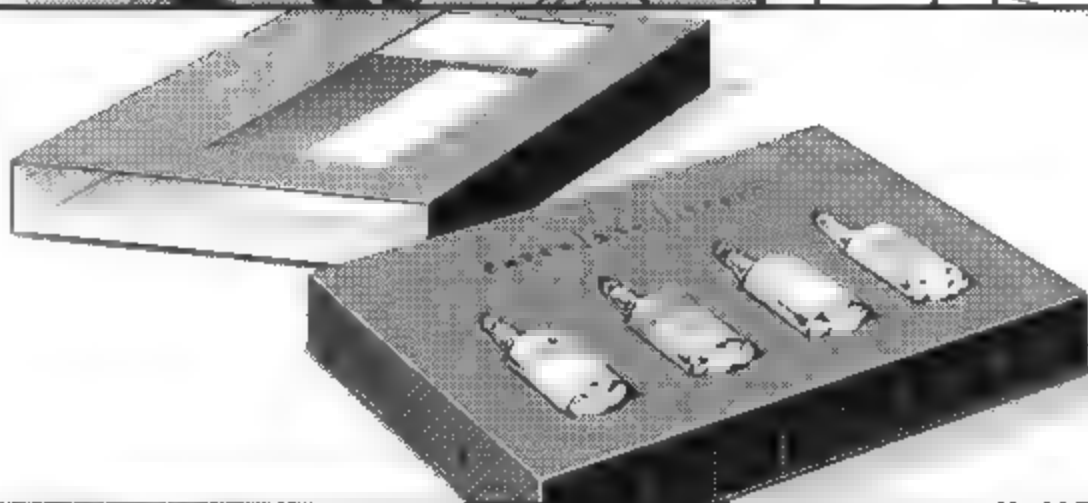
もぢ

MOJI

もぢ

EVEN MORE DAYS LATER







...BUT
I WAS
KIND OF
EMBAR-
RASSED,
SO...

ACTUALLY,
I HAD IT IN
MY BAG ALL
DAY...

DOKI
(THUMP)

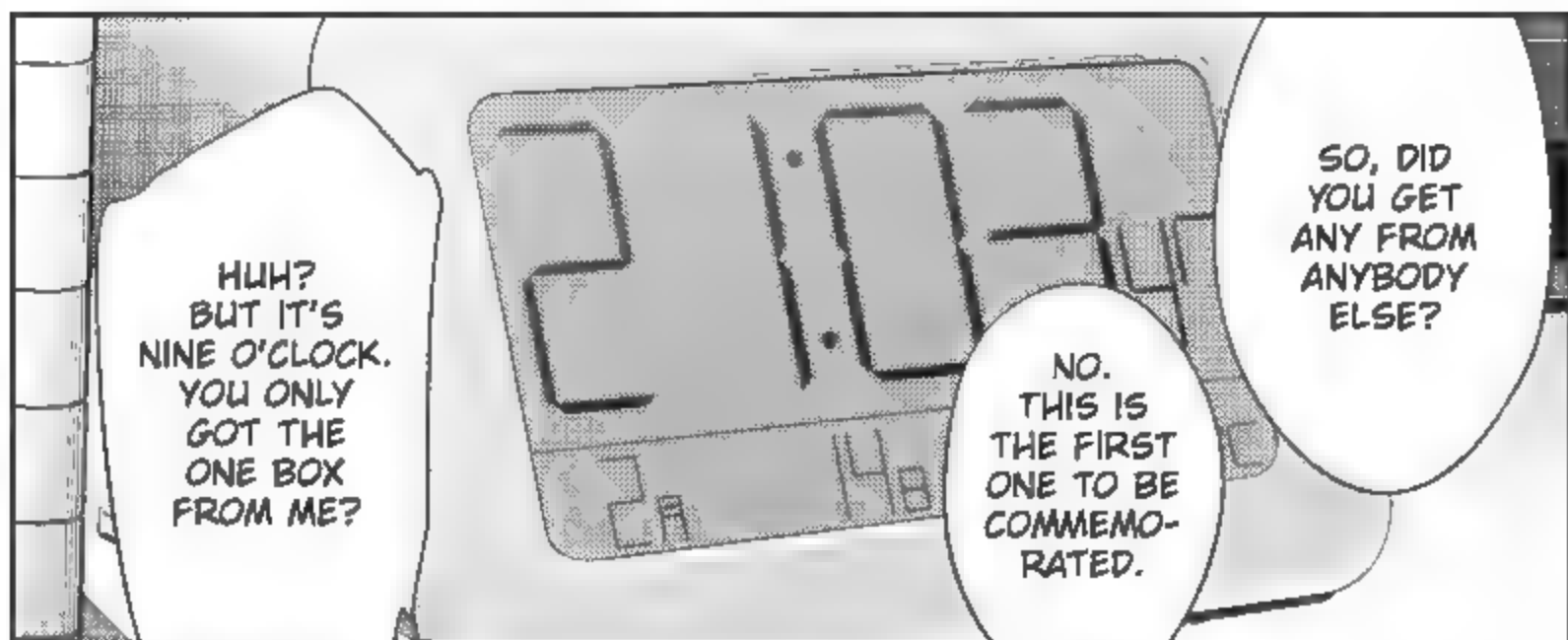
I—

I—

I
SEE...

LATELY,
ERIRI'S
REALLY
BEEN...

...SUCH A
GIRL...



CLOCK: FEBRUARY 14



**I HAD
HOPED
FOR IT
THOUGH!**

**EVEN IF SHE
HAD COME,
THERE'S NO
GUARANTEE
SHE WOULD
HAVE GIVEN
ME SOME.**

**...THE
THIRD-YEARS
DON'T NEED
TO ATTEND
SCHOOL
ANYMORE.**

**YOU KNOW,
I HAVEN'T
SEEN UTAHA
KASUMI-
GAOKA AT
ALL TODAY...**

**...EVEN THOUGH,
LAST WEEK, SHE
WAS GETTING IN
OUR BUSINESS
LEFT AND RIGHT.**

**I'D HOPED
FOR SOME
FAMILY
CHOCOLATE
FROM HER
THOUGH!**

**MICHIRU'S
GOT
SCHOOL.
IT'S A
WEEKDAY.**

**HUH? THE
MOOD'S KIND
OF...**

**HMM
...**

**WHAT
ABOUT HER?
YOU KNOW,
OUR HEAD OF
MUSIC, YOUR
COUSIN, THE
ONE WHO'S SO
SLOPPY ABOUT
LOTS OF
STUFF...?**

**OKAY,
SO WHAT
ABOUT
FROM
MEGUMI,
THEN?**

**AND,
DIDN'T YOU
TWO MAKE
PEACE!?**

**I DIDN'T
GET A
THING
FROM
HER! IT'S
ENTRANCE
EXAM
SEASON
FOR
IZUMI-
CHAN!**

**ALSO, I DON'T
WANT TO BELIEVE IT,
BUT DON'T TELL ME
YOU GOT SOMETHING
FROM THAT EVIL
BOSS LADY FROM
"ROUGE EN ROUGE"...**

**...I'D
HOPED FOR
GRATITUDE
CHOCOLATE
FROM HER
THOUGH!**





YEAH.
WE CHAT
EVERY DAY
VIA LINE.

HAVE YOU
KEPT IN
CONTACT
WITH KATOU
LATELY?



DID
SHE SAY
"LINE"?
ERIRI,
BEHAVING
LIKE A
HIGH
SCHOOL
GIRL?

WELL,
WE DON'T
HAVE A LOT
OF BACK
AND FORTH
THOUGH.



THAT'S
RIGHT.
KATOU
WASN'T
DIRECTLY
ANGRY
ABOUT
THAT.

ABOUT
THE GAME
NOT BEING
ON TIME,
OR US NOT
BEING
ABLE TO
TAKE ON
ROUGE EN
ROUGE...

AFTER
ALL,
SHE'S
STILL AS
FRIENDLY
AS EVER
WITH
ERIRI.



NO. WE
SETTLED
THAT.



...TO-
MOYA.



TO
THINK
MEGLUMI
OF ALL
PEOPLE
WOULD
HOLD A
GRUDGE
THAT
LONG
...

COULD
IT STILL
BE ABOUT
WINTER
COMIKET
...?



**WHY DIDN'T
YOU CONSULT
WITH ME...?**

BUT...

**THE
ATMOSPHERE
AROUND HER
AT THE TIME...
IT CAUSES
SOME SORT OF
INDESCRIBABLE
UNEASE TO WELL
UP IN MY HEART,
SOMETHING
I WOULDN'T
NORMALLY FEEL
ABOUT HER.**

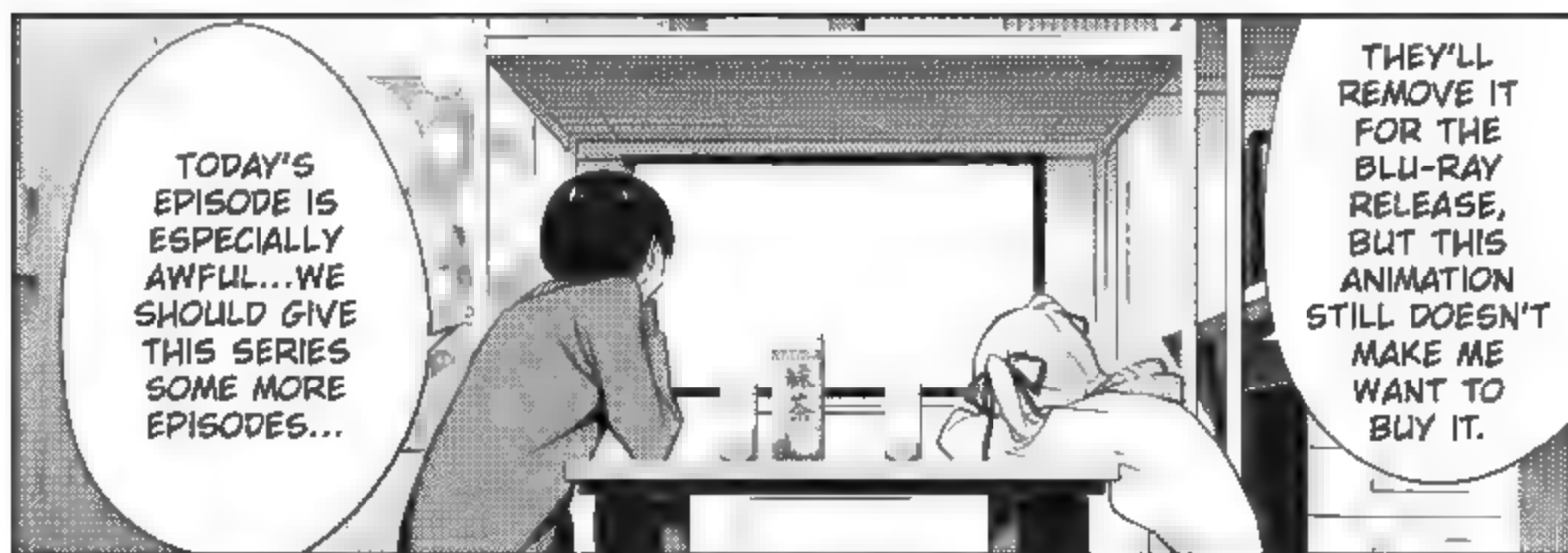
**THAT DAY,
WE WERE
ONLY ABLE
TO HAVE ONE
HUNDRED
COPIES
READY, AND
THAT WAS MY
FAULT AND
ERIRI'S.**

**ERIRI IS
TRYING TO
SHOULDER
THAT BLAME
HERSELF.**



**KATOU
FORGIVES
HER FOR THAT
SELF-ACCUSED
WAR CRIME. SHE
JUST DOESN'T
FORGIVE ME.
HER REASON
SHOULDN'T
BE DIRECTLY
RELATED TO
THAT FAILURE.**

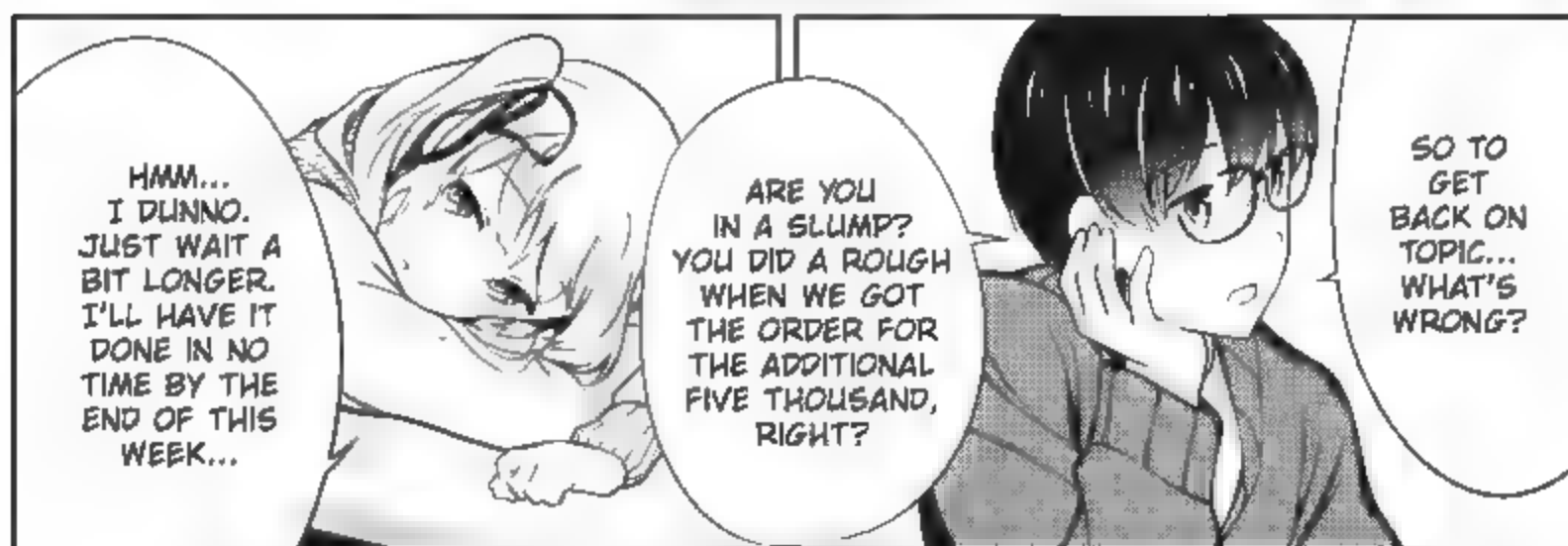




TODAY'S
EPISODE IS
ESPECIALLY
AWFUL...WE
SHOULD GIVE
THIS SERIES
SOME MORE
EPISODES...

THEY'LL
REMOVE IT
FOR THE
BLU-RAY
RELEASE,
BUT THIS
ANIMATION
STILL DOESN'T
MAKE ME
WANT TO
BUY IT.

CARTON: GREEN TEA



HMM...
I DUNNO.
JUST WAIT A
BIT LONGER.
I'LL HAVE IT
DONE IN NO
TIME BY THE
END OF THIS
WEEK...

ARE YOU
IN A SLUMP?
YOU DID A ROUGH
WHEN WE GOT
THE ORDER FOR
THE ADDITIONAL
FIVE THOUSAND,
RIGHT?

SO TO
GET
BACK ON
TOPIC...
WHAT'S
WRONG?



SU
(SHUFF)

IT'S
FINE,
IT'S
FINE...

SHE
SAYS
THE
SAME
THING
EVERY
WEEK!

ERRR...

KORON
(SLUMP)

BECAUSE,
RIGHT
NOW, I'M
SATISFIED.



AH!
YISS!?

...HEY,
TOMOYA.

GORDON
(ROLL)



SHE
DOESN'T
MEAN FROM
THIS, DOES
SHE!?

SFX: DOKI (BADLIM) DOKI DOKI DOKI DOKI



THE ORIGINAL
PACKAGE ART
WASN'T THAT
BAD. I WONDER
IF IT REALLY HAS
TO BE CHANGED
AFTER ALL...



WOULDN'T WE
ACTUALLY GET
COMPLAINTS
FROM PEOPLE
SAYING THEY
COULDN'T GET
THEIR HANDS
ON THE OLD
PACKAGE?

BUT IT
HASN'T
EVEN BEEN
A MONTH
SINCE WE
STARTED
SELLING
IN THE
SHOPS.



YEAH,
I'M THE
ONE WHO
SUGGESTED
IT... "THIS
OLD ART
EMBAR-
RASSES
ME," I
SAID.

HUH?
HUH?
BUT YOU
WERE
THE ONE
WHO—



SO IN
THE END...
YOU DON'T
WANT TO
DO IT?



WHAT I'M SAYING IS, WHETHER I WANT TO DO IT OR NOT IS IRRELEVANT, OKAY?

IS A NEW PACKAGE REALLY THAT IMPORTANT?



SO WHAT DOES IT MATTER... IF WE DON'T SELL ANY MORE COPIES?

RIGHT?



WE'VE ALREADY SOLD A THOUSAND COPIES, AND WE'VE BROKEN EVEN ON OUR PRODUCTION COSTS, RIGHT?

WE NEVER ASKED FOR THEM! NEITHER ME NOR UTAHA KASUMIGAOKA EITHER... NO MISTAKE, OKAY?

WELL, YES, IF I IGNORE THE FEES I OWE YOU AND UTAHA-SENPAI.



SETTING
ASIDE THE NEW
PACKAGING AND
MONEY ISSUES,
I WANT EVEN
MORE PEOPLE
TO PLAY OUR
GAME.

Y-YOU
KNOW,
ERIRI.

HM
.....?



WE'RE
GETTING
FURTHER
AND
FURTHER
OFF
TOPIC...

HMM. I GUESS
THAT WOULD
BE A GOOD
COMPROMISE.

AND MAKE
THE FULL
GAME AVAILABLE
FOR SALE BY
DOWNLOAD ONLY,
SO PEOPLE CAN
PLAY IT FOR
CHEAPER. THAT
WAY, THE PEOPLE
WHO BOUGHT
THE PACKAGED
EDITION STILL
HAVE AN
ADVANTAGE.



NO.
THAT
WOULD
ACTUALLY
BE A
SLAP IN
THE FACE
TO THE
CUSTOM-
ERS WHO
PAID FOR
THEIRS.

OH! IN
THAT CASE,
THEN HOW
ABOUT IF WE
DISTRIBUTED
IT FOR FREE?



THEN,
WHAT IF WE
RELEASE A
TRIAL VERSION
OF ONLY ONE
ROUTE THAT
YOU CAN PLAY
THROUGH
COMPLETELY?

RIGHT...
I GUESS
THAT IS
TRUE,
HUH?

...ERIRI'S BODY
IS TOO WEAK
TO CHANNEL
THE GODS OF
CREATIVITY...



I
MEAN

...

IF SHE
SAYS SHE
DOESN'T
WANT TO
DRAW,
I CAN'T
ATTACK
HER FOR
THAT.



...THIS
ANIME
REALLY IS
AWFUL,
ISN'T IT?

...IT'S
THE FRONT-
RUNNER FOR
DOMINATING
THE DOUJIN
SCENE THIS
SEASON.



COME TO
THINK OF
IT...WHY
WAS IT THAT
I WANTED
TO TRY TO
CREATE THE
GREATEST
GAL GAME
EVER?

OR WAS
IT THAT
I WANTED TO
BRING MYSELF
EVEN A TINY
BIT CLOSER
TO THE
CREATORS
I'VE ADMIRERD
SINCE
FOREVER?

OR DID I
WANT TO USE
A WORK I'D
CREATED AS A
STEPPING-
STONE TO
GLORIOUSLY
LAUNCH
MYSELF INTO
PROFESSIONAL
OTAKUDOM?

WAS IT THAT
I WANTED TO
LEAVE PROOF TO
THE WORLD OF
MY EXISTENCE
AS AN OTAKU?

OR
MAYBE...
JUST
MAYBE

.....

...WAIT,
I WASN'T
EXPECTING
ANYTHING
THOUGH.
IT NEVER
CROSSED
MY MIND
AT ALL!

YUP. THAT
SIX HOUR
PERIOD OF
WHO-KNOWS-
WHAT THAT
STARTS FROM
NINE P.M. ON
VALENTINE'S,
AND NOTHING
HAPPENED
BETWEEN
US.

WHEN
THE LATE-
NIGHT
ANIME
SHOWS
WERE
DONE,
ERIRI
WENT
HOME.

END

How to Raise a Boring Girlfriend







**YOU
DON'T
NEED
TO GO
THAT
FAR!**

ALSO,
BECAUSE
I DIDN'T
HAVE MUCH
TIME, I HAD
TO JUST
BUY THEM
FROM A
NEARBY
SHOP...

IT WOULD'VE BEEN
NICE IF I COULD'VE
MADE EACH AND EVERY
ONE BY HAND, THOUGH,
IMBUING THEM WITH
SPELLS AND MIXING
ONE OF MY HAIRS
INTO EACH ONE.



I'M REALLY
SORRY. I HAD
MEETINGS ON
THE FOUR-
TEENTH, SO
I COULDN'T
GO TO
SCHOOL...

S-STOP.
I'M
HONORED
JUST
TO GET
THEM...



KOFF!
NOW, LET
ME SAY
AGAIN...



AND
WELL DONE
AT YOUR
SIGNING
TODAY!

PACHI
CLAP
ち

PACHI
ち

PACHI
ち

PACHI
ち

**KASUMI-
SENSEI...**

...CONGRATULA-
TIONS ON THE
RELEASE OF
YOUR NEW WORK,
PURE HEART
HECTOPASCAL!



YES, RIGHT!
LIKE GUYS WHO
BASH IT BASED ON
THEIR VERY FIRST
IMPRESSIONS WHEN
THEY HAVEN'T EVEN
FINISHED READING
IT YET.

OR THEY
DELIBERATELY
SPREAD BULL
ABOUT IT,
OR REVEAL
CRUCIAL
SPOILERS.



YOU
GET A LOT
OF STRANGE
REACTIONS
WHEN THINGS
FIRST GO
ON SALE.



I'LL AVOID
LOOKING AT
ALL THAT
FOR NOW.



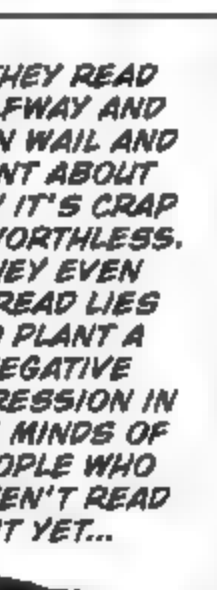
WE
SHOULD
BE SEEING
SOME
REACTIONS
ON TWITTER
AND STUFF
SOON.



**I
COMPLETELY
AGREE,
BUT COULD
YOU MIND
YOUR WORD
CHOICE AND
VOLUME!?**



...BUT THEY
JUST WANT
THE ATTENTION.
THEY'RE HAPPY TO
SACRIFICE ANY
CREATOR WHO PUT
THEIR HEART AND
SOUL INTO CREATING
ART. I WISH THEY
WERE ALL WIPED
OFF THE FACE OF
THE EARTH...!



...THEY READ
HALFWAY AND
THEN WAIL AND
RANT ABOUT
HOW IT'S CRAP
OR WORTHLESS.
THEY EVEN
SPREAD LIES
TO PLANT A
NEGATIVE
IMPRESSION IN
THE MINDS OF
PEOPLE WHO
HAVEN'T READ
IT YET...



THAT'S
ACTUALLY
TRUE...AND
EVEN THOUGH
ANYBODY COULD
UNDERSTAND
THE AUTHOR'S
INTENTIONS
IF THEY READ
THROUGH TO
THE END...



THAT'S IT!
NOW THAT
YOUR ALL-
NEW WORK IS
OUT, THIS IS
THE PERFECT
TIME TO
REVIVE IT!



THAT
REMINDS ME.
THERE HAVEN'T
BEEN ANY
UPDATES ON
"TAKI'S HOME-
PAGE" LATELY.
I HOPE YOU
HAVEN'T BEEN
FORGETTING
ABOUT IT.



CRAP!
I'LL HAVE
TO GET MY
THOUGHTS
UP ON MY
BLOG
SOMETIME
TODAY...!



COVER: PURE HEART HECTOPASCAL, UTAKO KASUMI







SO TAKE
YOUR TIME.

WELL, I'LL
JUST SLEEP
SITTING UP
FOR A WHILE
HERE LIKE I
ALWAYS DO.



NOW,
THEN!

oooH!
う
お
お
お
お

THANK
YOU,
UTAH-
SENPAI!



TIME TO
REEEAAAD!



...PFFT!
PFFHEE-
HEE-
HEE!



.....
GUH...!
SNIFF...!
RRGH...



WH...!?
WHAT THE
HELL!?



TH-THANKX...
SORREE...

...B-B-BUT
THE MAIN
CHARACTER'S
SUCH A
GOOD GUY...

THANKS

DAAAAA
(GUSH)

ああああ
ああああ

HAVE A
TISSUE.

I SORT OF
ACTUALLY
THOUGHT
IT WAS A
COMEDY
WHEN I
WROTE IT
THOUGH.





I'M SO SORRY!



OH,
BUT I'M
USED TO
NEGLECT
S&M...



IT WAS
COMPLETELY
SATISFYING!



AS YOU
ALWAYS
DO.



...TO BE HONEST, ME TRYING TO TALK ABOUT THAT TECHNICAL STUFF WITH A SMUG LOOK ON MY FACE ISN'T REMOTELY CONVINCING, IS IT?

NO, NO!
I FELT THE QUALITY OF THE PROSE AND ITS ABILITY TO DRAW THE READER IN IS EVEN MORE AMAZING THAN BEFORE, BUT...

YUP,
UTAKO KASUMI HASN'T CHANGED ONE BIT!

YOU MEAN I HAVEN'T MATURED AT ALL?



EVEN SO,
UTAKO KASUMI IS AT SOME LEVEL FAR BEYOND MY REACH!

DO YOU THINK SO?
YOU'RE A FINE CREATOR YOURSELF NOW, NO?



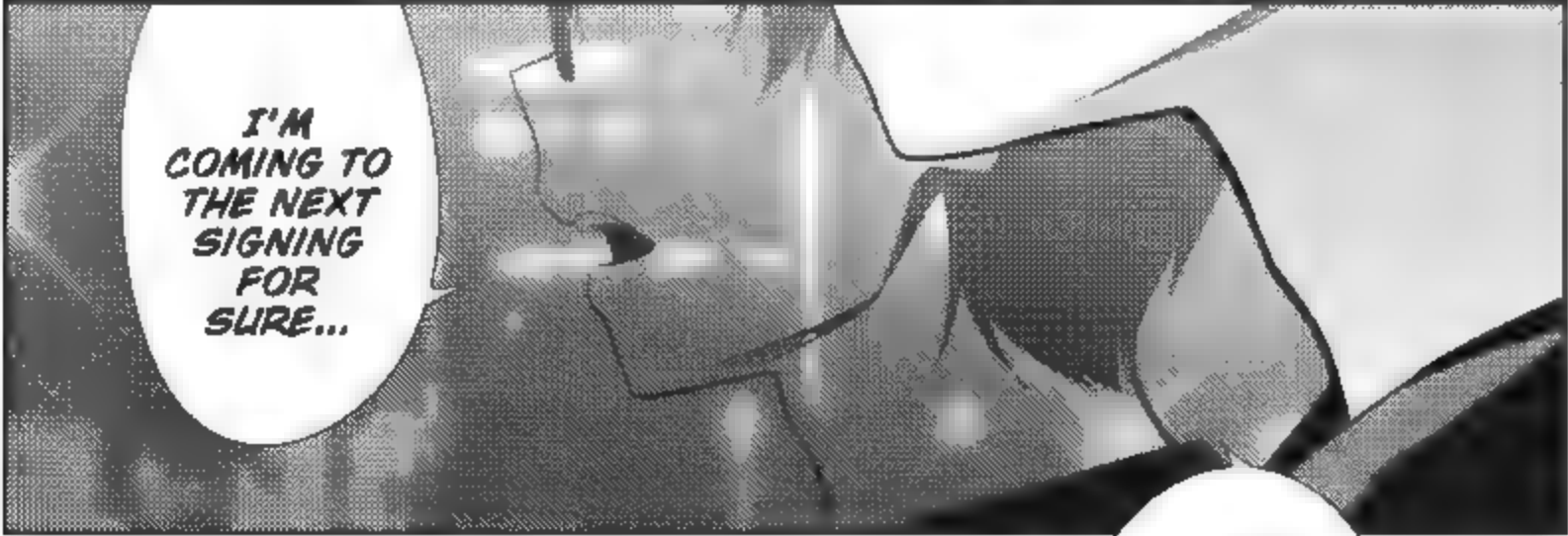
OH, IT'S AMAZING! IT'S PHENOMENAL, JUST LIKE I EXPECTED, UTAHA-SENPAI!

THIS IS THE ONE AND ONLY UTAKO KASUMI!

WHEN I SAY YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED, I MEAN SOMETHING ABOUT THE VERY ROOTS OF UTAKO KASUMI, LIKE HER TRUE ESSENCE ...

ANYWAY, IT JUST FEELS SO GREAT READING YOUR WORK! EVER SINCE METRONOME IN LOVE!





**I'M
COMING TO
THE NEXT
SIGNING
FOR
SURE...**



**...AND
THE ONE
AFTER
THAT, AND
THE ONE
AFTER
THAT.**

**RINRI-
KUN.....**



**WHATEVER
I NEED TO
DO TO WIN
TICKETS, I'LL
MAKE SURE
I GET PICKED.
YOU'LL
SEE...**

**SO
PLEASE DON'T
EVER TELL ME
YOU'RE SICK OF
FANS PESTERING
YOU, SO YOU'RE
GOING TO QUIT
MAKING PUBLIC
APPEARANCES,
OKAY?**



THANK
YOU...



BEFORE
NOW, IF I
SHOWED UP
TWO HOURS
BEFORE DOORS
OPENED, I
COULD GET IN
FIRST. BUT THIS
TIME, THERE
WERE ALREADY
FIVE PEOPLE
THERE!

ANYWAY,
TODAY'S
SIGNING
WAS
ROUGH!



WHAT
THE HELL
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT,
SENPAI!?

SAY
WHAT!?

GRR

BUT
I CAN SIGN
STUFF FOR
YOU ANYTIME,
YOU KNOW.

AND IT
WAS GREAT
THAT I
COULD BE
EXCITED
ABOUT UTAKO
KASUMI
TOGETHER
WITH THE
OTHER
PEOPLE IN
LINE TOO!

I WAS SO
CRUSHED!
BUT,
IT'S AN
INDICATION
OF HOW
MUCH
MORE
POPULAR
UTAKO
KASUMI
HAS
BECOME
NOW!



IN ANY CASE,
IT WAS REALLY
SELLING. NINETY
PERCENT OF THE
PEOPLE AT THE
CASH REGISTER
WERE BUYING
PURE HEART
HECTOPASCAL.
I WAS REALLY
ASTONISHED!



THAT'S
BECAUSE
IT WAS
THE DAY
OF A
SIGNING...



PLUS,
SALES HERE
ARE A SHAKY
INDICATOR
AT BEST.



OH...!
THAT'S
RIGHT...



AND, AS WITH HER
PREVIOUS WORKS,
IT'S THE SETTING
OF THE NOVEL TOO.
IT MAY BE ONLY
NATURAL.

THE
THING ABOUT
WAGOUSHI IS IT'S
ONE OF THREE
SINGULARITIES, ALONG
WITH AKIHABARA
AND JINBOUCHOU,
THAT BOAST THE TOP
SALES OF UTAKO
KASUMI'S WORKS
NATIONWIDE



CATCHING THE
FIRST TRAIN,
LINING UP,
THE NUMBERED
TICKETING SYSTEM,
A LOTTERY
SYSTEM THAT'S
ESSENTIALLY
BASED ON THE
NUMBER OF
BOOKS YOU BUY,
AND A TELEPHONE
RECEPTION DESK
YOU CAN'T GET
THROUGH TO NO
MATTER HOW MANY
TIMES YOU CALL...

OVERCOMING
ALL THOSE
HURDLES
AND FINALLY
GETTING YOUR
HANDS ON AN
AUTOGRAPH IS
WHAT GIVES
IT VALUE!

ASKING
THE AUTHOR
'COS YOU KNOW
HER AND JUST
SNAPPING ONE
UP...TO CALL
ONESELF A
TRUE BELIEVER
WOULD BE
BEYOND
IMPUDENT!

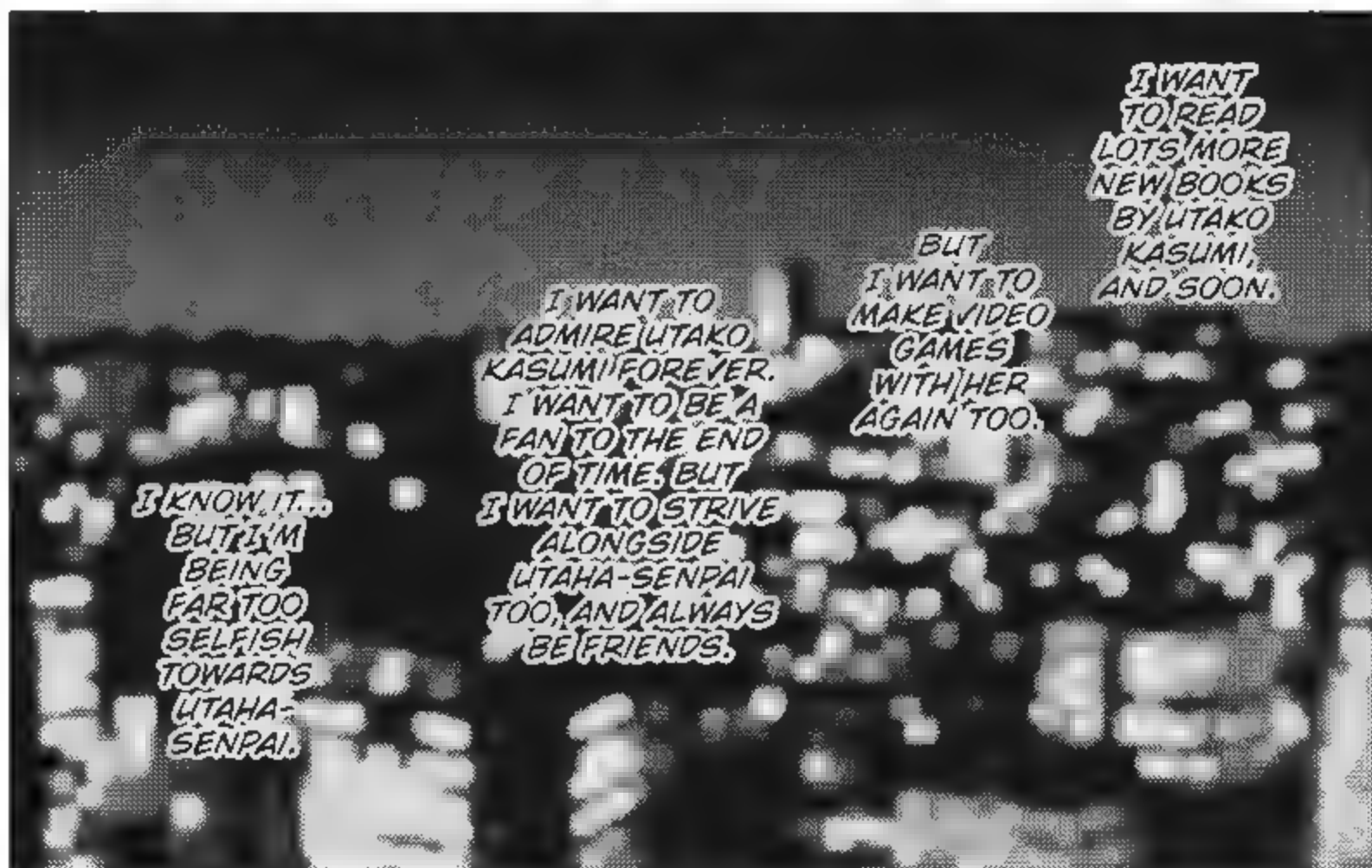
...YOU
REALLY
HAVEN'T
CHANGED,
RINRI-
KUN.





THAT'S JUST
SO AMAZING,
AND I'M SO
HAPPY FOR
HER...

...AND
I HATE
IT.



I WANT
TO READ
LOTS MORE
NEW BOOKS
BY UTAKO
KASUMI,
AND SOON.

BUT
I WANT TO
MAKE VIDEO
GAMES
WITH HER
AGAIN TOO.

I WANT TO
ADMIRE UTAKO
KASUMI FOREVER.
I WANT TO BE A
FAN TO THE END
OF TIME, BUT
I WANT TO STRIVE
ALONGSIDE
UTAHA-SENPAI
TOO, AND ALWAYS
BE FRIENDS.

I KNOW IT...
BUT I'M
BEING
FAR TOO
SELFISH
TOWARDS
UTAHA-
SENPAI.

I'M
ASKING
FOR TOO
MUCH,
HUH.....?



BRR!



SAY,
SENPAI,
ARE YOU
COMING
TO SCHOOL
AT THE
START
OF NEXT
WEEK?



I SEE
.....

NEXT TIME
I COME TO
SCHOOL MIGHT
BE FOR THE
GRADUATION
CEREMONY.

I'M NOT
SURE...



WELL,
IF YOU'RE READING
THE VALEDICTORY
ADDRESS, SENPAI,
THEN I'D LOVE TO
GO SEE IT.

ARE YOU
COMING
TO THE
GRADUATION
CEREMONY,
RINRI-KUN?



FEELS LIKE
IT'S GOING
TO SNOW.



IF YOU'LL
READ THE
FAREWELL
SPEECH, THEN
I WOULDN'T
RULE IT OUT
THOUGH.



ARE YOU
AWARE OF MY
MARKS AND
REPUTATION IN
THE SCHOOL
WHEN YOU
SAY THAT?



AND YOU
KNOW MY
REPUTATION
AT SCHOOL,
DON'T YOU?



THANK
YOU...

CONGRATU-
LATIONS ON
GRADUATING,
UTAHA-
SENPAL.

WELL,
THEN, LET
ME SAY
IT RIGHT
NOW...





ANYWAY, BEING A UNIVERSITY STUDENT, I'LL HAVE FREE TIME EVERY DAY, SO I MIGHT BE ABLE TO FOCUS ON MY WORK AS AN AUTHOR.

WELL, I'LL KEEP WORKING ON PURE HEART HECTOPASCAL FOR A WHILE



GOOD QUESTION ...

U-UTAHA-SENPAI...

.....ONCE YOU START UNIVERSITY, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?



AND...

AND...



...WHAT ABOUT OUR CIRCLE ...?



...BUT THESE ARE STILL MY HONEST FEELINGS.

I KNOW I'M BEING OVERLY SELFISH...

BUT EVEN SO, COULD YOU STAY IN? NOT JUST AS A FORMER MEMBER, BUT AS AN OFFICIAL ONE?

I KNOW THAT IT'D BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO SHOW UP EVERY DAY LIKE YOU HAVE SO FAR.





HUH
...?

CAN YOU
PULL THAT
OFF?

AND
WHO ARE
YOU GOING
TO GET
FOR THE
ART?

ARE YOU
GOING TO
SECURE
SAWAMURA-
SAN
AGAIN?



W-
WELL...

GIVE
ME A
WEEK!



WELL...

SO WHEN
WILL SHE GET
OVER IT? HOW
LONG DO YOU
HAVE TO WAIT
BEFORE ERI
KASHIWAGI
COMES
BACK?



N-NO,
BUT SHE'S
JUST IN
A SLUMP
RIGHT
NOW...



ALTHOUGH,
THAT
DOESN'T
SEEM TO BE
THE CASE
FOR A
CERTAIN
OTHER GIRL
WITH LONG,
DARK
HAIR.

WHAT
HAPPENED AT THE
END OF THE YEAR
COULDN'T BE
HELPED. SHE WAS
DRIVEN RIGHT TO
THE WALL, AND IT
EVEN AFFECTED
HER HEALTH.

SO I DON'T
BEGRUDGE
ANYONE FOR
THE BUSINESS
WITH THE
WINTER
COMIKET...



SHE'S
NEVER
BEEN THIS
FAR FROM
HER OWN
ART.

DON'T
YOU SEE?
SAWAMURA-
SAN HASN'T
PRODUCED A
SINGLE PIECE
SINCE THE
YEAR
BEGAN.

ARE YOU
OKAY WITH
THAT?



BUT SHE'S
TAKEN OVER
A MONTH FOR
ONE DRAWING
NOW, AND
THERE ARE
NO OTHER
EXTENUATING
CIRCUM-
STANCES.
SO IF SHE
STILL CAN'T
DRAW, THEN
SHE WON'T
BE ABLE
TO MANAGE
ANY MORE
CREATIVE
ENDEAVORS.



DO YOU
THINK A
SLOPPY
CIRCLE LIKE
THAT CAN
JUST PLOD
ALONG?

YOU
HAVEN'T
SET ANY
GOALS,
YOU CAN'T
MAINTAIN
YOUR
DEADLINES,
AND YOU
DON'T
FIGHT...



AND I'VE GOT
NO TALENT
MYSELF AT
ALL, YET I
JUST SHOVE
EVERYONE ELSE
AROUND...

BUT I'VE
PUSHED
EVERYONE
TOO HARD
ALREADY.



THAT'S THE
DIRECTOR'S
JOB.

BUT THAT'S
WITHIN A
PRODUCER'S
AUTHORITY.



I...
I.....

...WANT
TO KEEP
THIS CIRCLE
GOING FOR A
LONG, LONG
TIME.

SO IF
ANY OF ITS
MEMBERS
ARE FEELING
TROUBLED,
I DON'T
WANT TO
FORCE
THEM.





**I WANT
TO WORK
WITH HER
AGAIN IF
I CAN.**

**I WANT
TO MAKE
SOMETHING
AGAIN WITH ERI
KASHIWAGI'S
ART THAT
SURPASSES
CHERRY
BLESSING.**



**I MAY HAVE
MADE CONTACT
WITH THE VERY
ROOTS OF UTAKO
KASUMI JUST
NOW.**

**...THAT SHE
WAS SUCH A
BIG FAN OF ERI
KASHIWAGI'S
WORK...**

**I NEVER
KNEW...**

■ TO BE CONTINUED ■



CHARACTER DESIGNER

**THE
TRUE
END
ROUTE!**

AND
THE TWO
OF US WILL
VANISH INTO
THE HORIZON
IN A WHITE
ITASHA!

AND...!
AND...!

**I'LL
SUDDENLY
BECOME
JAPAN'S
TOP
CREATOR!**

EVER
SINCE
WE WERE
KIDS, I'VE
ALWAYS...

SUBJECT
OF BIOPIC

ILLUSTRATOR

IDOL MANGA
 ARTIST

GIVE
UP.

HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH

IF I
JUST
TAKE THIS
IDEA TO
MARLITO-
SENSEI
AND THE
DIREC-
TORS...!

**WELL,
WHAT THE
HELL ARE YOU
WRITING, YOU
FANTASY-
CRAZED, DOUR,
DIRTY, SLUTTY
WRITER!?**

**"Utaha-senpai!
I mean, Utaha!
I've finally
realized it!
That I love you,
Utaha, as an
author and as
a woman!"**

**"Oh, Rinri-kun...
No—Tomoya!"**

I
EXPECT
THEY
STARTED
PRELIMINARY
STORY
MEETINGS
AGES
AGO.

SFX. GO (RUMBLE) GO GO GO GO GO GO GO GO GO GO

LOOK
FOR-
WARD
TO IT!

UH, FOR ALL THE EXCITING ANIME INFO, PLEASE CHECK OUT *DRAGON MAGAZINE*!

YUP.
I CAN
FORETELL
THAT, AT
LEAST.

HEY, TOMO,
IT'S STILL
GONNA BE
JUST LIKE
THIS NEXT
SEASON,
ISN'T IT?

UTAH
KASUMI-
GAOKAI

**I DON'T
NEED TO
HEAR THIS
FROM SOME
FANTA-
SIZING, LEG-
SPREADING
ERO-MANGA
MASTER!**

YIKES!

THE END

How to Raise a Boring Girlfriend

How to Raise a Boring Girlfriend

7
PART
BIKINI ARMOR

THE
"MEGU-TAN,"
IF YOU CAN'T HAVE A
PERSONALITY THAT STANDS
OUT RIGHT AWAY, THEN
WHY NOT WORK ON YOUR
APPEARANCE FIRST?
SECTION ☆



PAGE 34

Zousui is a thin vegetable and rice porridge. Like many porridge dishes, it is commonly served to people when they are sick.

PAGE 38

Udon is a Japanese noodle made from wheat flour. It is cut thicker than most other types of noodles.

Soba is a Japanese noodle made from buckwheat flour. It is cut thinner than udon.

Nabeyaki udon is a hot pot noodle dish made from udon that commonly includes chicken, fish cakes, mushrooms, vegetables, as well as egg and tempura shrimp.

PAGE 46

Christmas in Japan is generally not seen as a religious holiday. Instead, it is considered a day for couples, somewhat similar to Valentine's Day.

PAGE 49

The building pictured here is Tokyo Big Sight, the massive convention center where Comic Market is held.

PAGE 58

Kameda Café is a reference to the Japanese coffee shop chain Komeda Coffee. The sign for Komeda Coffee features a turtle—*kame* means "turtle" in Japanese.

COMMON HONORIFICS

no honorific: Indicates familiarity or closeness; if used without permission or reason, addressing someone in this manner would constitute an insult.
-san: The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.

-sama: Conveys great respect; may also indicate that the social status of the speaker is lower than that of the addressee.

-kun: Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.

-chan (also **-tan**): An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals of either gender.

-senpai: An honorific used to address upperclassmen or more experienced coworkers.

-sensei: A respectful honorific for teachers, artists, or high-level professionals.

PAGE 10

While doujin goods are typically first sold at events such as Comic Market, it is common to continue to sell them through specialty doujin shops.

PAGE 33

Peyou is a reference to Peyoung, a brand of Japanese instant *yakisoba*. Peyoung comes in a variety of flavors, including exotic ones such as peperoncino and chocolate.

Tonkotsu ramen is a style of ramen where the broth is made from pork bone (*tonkotsu*).

PAGE 119

While anime in Japan can be seen at all hours of the day, **late-night anime** (aired midnight or later) are typically the shows most commonly designed to appeal to hardcore otaku.

PAGE 120

"Today is that time of the month!" In the Japanese language version, Eri calls Valentine's Day "that day," a common euphemism for when a girl is on her period.

In Japan, **Valentine's Day** is an occasion for girls to give chocolate to boys, instead of the other way around.

PAGE 122–123

While the traditional distinctions for Valentine's Day chocolates are **courtesy chocolates** (given to friends out of obligation) and romantic chocolates, the categories have expanded over the years to include **family chocolates** (given to family members), **gratitude chocolates** (given as thanks for a favor), and more.

PAGE 125

Line is a messaging app popular in Japan that was first released in 2011. One of its signature features is the ability to purchase digital stickers that can be used in chats.

PAGE 68

The **childhood friend** is a character archetype in anime, manga, and games who typically has a close bond with the main character due to knowing each other as kids. While once a very dominant archetype, especially in the mid 1990s to early 2000s (and the one most likely to become the canon girlfriend), they have become less popular in recent years.

PAGE 81

The title of the book Megumi is reading, **Girigiri**, is a play on the word *girigiri* ("cutting it close") and *giri* ("obligation").

PAGE 87

The **Rinkai Line** and the **Yurikamome Line** are two different rail services that go from Tokyo Big Sight to Odaiba in Japan. The two lines are owned by competing railway companies.

PAGE 108

Toranoana (literally "the tiger's flower") is a parody of Toranoana ("the tiger's den"), a popular chain of doujin shops in Japan. The name Toranoana originally came from the villainous organization of evil wrestlers in the wrestling manga *Tiger Mask*.

PAGE 112

"Listen. Don't be writing my name in any evil notebooks, okay?" Tomoya is referencing the manga *Death Note*, where a high school boy obtains a mysterious notebook that allows him to kill anyone in the world by writing their names into the book.

PAGE 162

Itasha ("painful cars") are motor vehicles garishly covered in large anime artwork, frequently cute female characters. A symbol of being a hardcore otaku, their name implies that they are painful cost-wise and appearance-wise.

PAGE 127–128

"Oh. Here comes the obvious steam cover-up." In order to keep racy elements within broadcast standards, anime bath scenes often feature lots of steam to hide body parts. However, this also provides incentive to fans to purchase the Blu-ray release, as these scenes will often be uncensored on home video.

PAGE 128

"...this animation still doesn't make me want to buy it." There are many terms for animation in Japanese, and the one originally used here is *sakuga*. Literally meaning "created images," it is used by fans to mean the quality of animation. Broadly speaking, "good *sakuga*" is dynamic, exciting, and well-drawn, while "bad *sakuga*" is incomplete and shoddy.

PAGE 150

Haru●● Mura●●●● is Haruki Murakami, one of Japan's most critically acclaimed living novelists, whose works frequently explore loneliness and alienation. Murakami's most famous works include *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* and *1Q84*. If Utaha were able to surpass Murakami, she'd become one the most successful Japanese writers ever.

PAGE 152–153

In Japanese high school graduation ceremonies, it is common for the top graduating student to give a **valedictory speech** known as *touji*. This is followed by a **farewell speech** given by the best non-graduating students to the graduating class, known as *souji*.

HOW TO RAISE A BORING GIRLFRIEND 7

TAKESHI MORIKI

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